



# LANDMARKS IN THE LIFE OF STALIN

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## C O N T E N T S

<i>Chap.</i>	Page
I Childhood and Youth ... ... ...	1
II Early Activities in the Social-Democratic Movement ... ... ...	10
III Activities During the First Russian Revolution	22
IV Activities in the Period of Reaction ...	40
V Revolutionary Revival and Imperialist War ...	54
VI Preparation for and Achievement of the October Socialist Revolution ... ... ...	63
VII Early Period of Soviet Government ...	75
VIII Civil War ... ... ...	83
IX Peace and Economic Restoration ...	89
X The Struggle for Socialist Industrialization (1926—1929) ... ... ...	98
XI The Collectivization of Agriculture ...	107
XII Activities after the Seventeenth Party Congress (1935—1939) ... ... ...	120
XIII A Leader of Nations ... ... ...	132

*You may have no doubt, comrades, that I am prepared in the future, too, to devote to the cause of the working class, to the cause of the proletarian revolution and world Communism, all my strength, all my faculties, and if need be, all my blood, to the very last drop.*

—STALIN





Joseph Stalin.



# LANDMARKS IN THE LIFE OF STALIN

## CHAPTER I

### CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

Stalin was born on December 21, 1879, in a small house on the outskirts of the town of Gori, in the former Tiflis Province. "The room in which the family lived," D. Gogokhia, a schoolfellow of Comrade Stalin's, tells us in his reminiscences, "was not more than about five square yards and adjoined the kitchen of the house. The door led straight into the courtyard; there was not even a doorstep. The floor was of brick. Light filtered in through a small window. The whole furniture of the room consisted of a small table, a stool, and a large sofa, something in the nature of a built-in bunk covered with a straw pallet."

The thousands of visitors who flock to Gori every year are profoundly moved at the sight of the humble home in which Stalin passed his childhood. His parents were poor folk. His father, Vissarion Djugashvili, was a shoemaker who for many years had been employed at the Adelkhanov factory, and at one time had worked at home as a cobbler. Visitors may still see Vissarion Djugashvili's "instruments of production"—the old rickety chair, the hammer and lasts. Stalin's mother, Ekaterina, was a hard-working woman who had to slave day and night to make ends meet in her poor household, and was obliged to go out to work as a washerwoman. Stalin was acquainted with poverty and want from his earliest childhood. All around he saw the dire need of the workers and peasants, and sympathy for the exploited classes awakened early in his young breast.

In the numerous reminiscences of Stalin written by his childhood friends he is described as a lively and inquisitive boy, a favourite among his companions. At the age of seven he began to learn the alphabet, and within a year was able to read first in Georgian and then in Russian. From 1888 to 1894 he attended the ecclesiastical school in Gori. Like Lenin, he was a diligent scholar and always obtained the highest marks. He was first in study and play, a leader

in all games, a good friend and a favourite among his schoolfellows. He was fond of reading, drawing and singing.

While still a schoolboy, Stalin would often talk to workers and peasants and explain to them the causes of their poverty. G. Elisabedashvili, a schoolfellow of Stalin's tells how once while walking in the country they came upon a group of ploughmen resting in a field :

" Seeing with what gusto one of the peasants was consuming his meal of bread and beans, Comrade Stalin turned to him and said :

" 'Why do you eat such poor food ? You plough and sow and gather in the harvest yourself. You ought to be living much better.'

" 'Yes, we gather in the harvest ourselves all right,' the peasant replied. 'But the police inspector has to get his share, and the priest his. So you see there isn't much left over for us.'

" This started a conversation, in the course of which Comrade Stalin explained step by step why the peasants lived so poorly, who exploited them, who were their friends, and who their enemies. He spoke so simply and interestingly that the peasants begged him to come and talk to them again."

At a very early age, while still a pupil in the ecclesiastical school, he developed a critical mind and revolutionary sentiments ; he began to read Darwin and became an atheist.

G. Glurdjidze, a boyhood friend of Stalin's relates :

" I began to speak of God. Joseph heard me out, and after a moment's silence said :

" 'You know, they are fooling us, there is no God. . . .'

" I was astonished at these words. I had never heard anything like it before.

" 'How can you say such things, Soso ?' I exclaimed.

" 'I'll lend you a book to read ; it will show you that the world and all living things are quite different from what you imagine, and all this talk about God is sheer nonsense,' Joseph said.

" 'What book is that ?' I enquired.

" 'Darwin. You must read it,' Joseph impressed on me."

Another of Stalin's schoolfellows in Gori, Comrade Vano Ketskhoveli, relates the following in his reminiscences of their schooldays :

" In the spring and autumn we used to ramble in the country on Sundays. Our favourite spot was a small clearing on the slopes of Mount Goridjvari.

"Years passed ; bearing away with them our childhood longings and dreams.

"While in the upper classes of the Gori school, we became acquainted with Georgian literature, but we had no mentor to guide our development and give a definite direction to our thoughts. Chavchavadze's\* poem 'Kako the Robber' made a deep impression on us. Kazbegi's heroes awakened in our youthful hearts a love for our country, and each of us, on leaving school, was inspired with an eagerness to serve his country. But none of us had a clear idea what form this service should take."

While still at the Gori Ecclesiastical School, as well as becoming familiar with the works of Darwin, Stalin first became acquainted with Marxist ideas. He passed out from the Gori School in 1894 with a certificate of merit, and entered the theological seminary in Tiflis. He found it hard to reconcile himself to the system that prevailed there. It was an institution of the closed type in which the students lived in cloistered seclusion, cut off from the outside world. The teachers were monks, who tried to instil in the students a reverence for God, the tsar, the church and private property. As in a monastery, the church bell would toll every day at set hours calling the students to prayer. The principal item in the curriculum was theology. The students, for example, were set essays on such subjects as "In what language did Balaam's ass speak?" The students were surrounded by a regular spy system, and watched at every step, the minds of many of them being mutilated for life by this oppressive and stultifying ecclesiastical regime. The ecclesiastical schools and seminaries used to turn out loyal servitors of the tsar and the regime, thoroughgoing bigots and reactionaries. But many a revolutionary also emerged from behind their walls, such as Nikolai Chernyshevsky,\*\* Lado Ketskhoveli, and Mikha Tskhakaya. Their revolutionary sentiments sprang from the sufferings of the masses and were strengthened by the reading of books forbidden to students. Moreover, the weight of the fetters that the ecclesiastical schools and seminaries and the other tsarist educational establishments imposed on the minds of the youth often roused a spirit of protest and drove the students to seek escape from the stifling atmosphere. Here is what Stalin himself, in the interview he gave the German writer Emil Ludwig, said about the influence the theological seminary had on him :

\* ILYA CHAVCHAVADZE (1837-1907). Georgian writer and publicist. Demanded the destruction of serfdom. Defended the Georgian language and culture. Advocated capitalist development of Georgia by the Liberal nobles.

\*\* N. G. CHERNSHEVSKY. Nineteenth-century revolutionary intellectual who advocated a peasant revolution to replace the great landowners by village communes. Lenin was a great admirer of his writings.

"In protest against the humiliating regime and the jesuitical methods that prevailed in the seminary, I was ready to become, and eventually did become, a revolutionary, a believer in Marxism as the only genuinely revolutionary doctrine."

Stalin was still a lad of fifteen when he formed connections with Marxists and began to read Marxist literature.

"I joined the revolutionary movement," he told Emil Ludwig, "at the age of fifteen, when I became connected with certain illegal groups of Russian Marxists in Transcaucasia. These groups exerted a great influence on me and instilled in me a taste for illegal Marxist literature."

Marxist literature was not easy to obtain in Tiflis in those days. At a conference of propagandists held in 1938 under the auspices of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Stalin related how the young Marxists in Tiflis were obliged to pool their pennies and have a transcript made by hand of the only copy of Marx's "Capital" to be found in Tiflis. It was from this handwritten copy that Marx's work was then studied in the secret circle formed for the purpose. It was in circles like these that the works of Marx, Plekhanov, Chernyshevsky, Pisarev, Belinsky, Dobrolyubov and Herzen were studied.

By this time Stalin had read many books in Russian and Georgian. He also read translations of foreign literature. His interests were wide, his knowledge varied, and he eagerly strove to extend it and obtain a thorough groundwork of general knowledge. He subscribed to a circulating library in Tiflis, although seminary students were forbidden to do so. He had a good knowledge of the classics—Shakespeare, Schiller, Tolstoy. He read Chernyshevsky and Pisarev. His favourite writers were Saltykov-Shchedrin, Gogol and Chekhov, whose works he often quotes in his articles and speeches.

Stalin was acquainted with the Georgian writers—Rust'hveli, Eristavi, Chavchavadze and others. He was well read in the history of civilization and sociology and was interested in chemistry and geology. His love of poetry is shown by the little-known fact that he wrote quite good verses himself, some of which were published in 1895 in the newspaper "Iberia," signed "Soselo." In one of these poems he says:

"Whose back was bent with toil unending,  
Who knelt but yesterday in thrall,  
Will rise, I say, the mountain's envy,  
On wings of hope, high over all."

So wrote this sixteen-year-old lad, confident that a day

would come when in the Russian words of the "International" "the lowliest will be the highest." Much of Stalin's youthful verses were appreciated by progressive Georgian intellectuals, and one of his poems was included in a jubilee anthology dedicated to the Georgian writer Rafail Eristavi.

Very interesting reminiscences of this period are given by Comrade G. Parkadze, who draws a vivid picture of the intellectual pursuits of Stalin and his fellow-students:

"We youngsters had a passionate thirst for knowledge.

"Thus, in order to disabuse the minds of our seminary students of the myth that the world was created in six days, we had to acquaint ourselves with the geological origin and age of the earth, and be able to prove them in argument; we had to familiarize ourselves with Darwin's teachings. We were aided in this by books on Galileo and Copernicus and by the fascinating works of Camille Flammarion. I recall that we read Lyell's "Antiquity of Man" and Darwin's "Descent of Man," the latter in a translation edited by Sechenov. Comrade Stalin read Sechenov's scientific works with great interest.

"We gradually proceeded to a study of the development of class society, which led us to the writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin. In those days the reading of Marxist literature was punishable as revolutionary activity. The effect of this was particularly felt in the seminary, where even the name of Darwin was always mentioned with scurrilous abuse.

"While acquainting ourselves with social and economic literature, we young people continued to be interested in astronomy, physics and chemistry. We derived great benefit from Ludwig Feuerbach's "Essence of Christianity."

"Comrade Stalin brought these books to our notice. The first thing we had to do, he would say, was to become atheists. Many of us began to acquire a materialist outlook and to ignore theological subjects.

"Our reading in the most diverse branches of science not only helped our young people to escape from the bigoted and narrow-minded spirit of the seminary, but also prepared their minds for the reception of Marxist ideas. Every book we read, whether on archaeology, geology, astronomy or primitive civilization, helped to confirm us in the truth of Marxism.

"The younger generation of to-day can scarcely imagine how difficult it was in those times not only to secure books, but even to read them. For example, the seminary authorities took away from Comrade Stalin, or 'confiscated,' as the report of the assistant supervisor puts it, Victor Hugo's "Toilers of the Sea." The same fate befell another book of his, Hugo's "Ninety-Three."

"We obtained our books from a circulating library on Kirochnaya Street. It was frequented mostly by teachers and other intellectuals; Maxim Gorky made use of it in the early 'nineties. It had been founded for educational purposes, but nobody suspected how much political dynamite we extracted from the most ordinary books.

"Comrade Stalin taught us how to delve into the meaning of books, and how, in the absence of books on any particular subject, to make the most of magazine articles, reviews and even incidental comments. This accustomed us to the habit of making summaries of what we read and copying excerpts. When suggesting reading matter to us, Stalin at first selected popular, and then more difficult literature, taking pains to explain anything that was not clear to us in our reading.

"One day I got hold of a copy of Mendeleev's 'Chemistry.' I remember the book well to this day. Stalin was keenly interested in it.

"We now know from the seminary records that Father Germogen, the seminary supervisor, reported that Djugashvili (Stalin) 'it appears has a subscription ticket to the Cheap Library, from which he gets books.'

"Comrade Stalin had a passion for history, and we often wondered where he got the books from. I recall that he had books on the history of the Great French Revolution, the Revolution of 1848, the Paris Commune, on Russian history. . . .

"Comrade Stalin was seventeen when, in 1896, he formed his first illegal Marxist study circle in the seminary and became a propagandist of Marxism. A second circle was formed later. I belonged to the first, the 'senior' group. . . .

"Of the books read by Stalin and his comrades in those years, I recall: "The Communist Manifesto"; Engels' "Condition of the Working Class in England"; Lenin's "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats" (Lenin: "Selected Works," Vol. I); Bel托v's (Plekhanov's) "Development of the Monistic View of History"; Adam Smith's and David Ricardo's books on political economy; Tugan-Baranovsky; Spinoza's "Ethics"; Buckle's "History of Civilization in England"; Letourneau's "Evolution of Property"; Zieber's "Social and Economic Researches of David Ricardo and Karl Marx," and books on philosophy.

"Comrade Stalin was fond of works of fiction. He read Saltykov-Shchedrin's "The Golovlyov Family," Gogol's "Dead Souls," Erckmann-Chatrian's "Story of a Peasant," Thackeray's "Vanity Fair," and much else. Stalin had been well acquainted with the Georgian writers from child-

hood ; he was fond of Rust'hveli, Ilya Chavchavadze and Vazha Pshavela. He was enthusiastic about literature, and while at the Tiflis seminary wrote several poems which earned the praises of Ilya Chavchavadze. I need only mention that they were printed in the newspaper Chavchavadze edited, being given a prominent place on the front page, although seminary students were strictly forbidden to contribute to newspapers or magazines."

Comrade G. Glurdjidze, another fellow-student of Stalin's at the Tiflis seminary (now a teacher in a secondary school near Gori), states in his reminiscences :

"We would sometimes read in chapel during service, hiding the book under the pews. Of course, we had to be extremely careful not to be caught by the masters. Books were Joseph's inseparable friends ; he would not part with them even at meal times. . . . When asked a question, Joseph would as a rule take his time in answering.

"One of our keenest pleasures in the unbearably stifling atmosphere of the seminary was singing. We were always overjoyed when Soso arranged us in an improvised choir and, in his clear and pleasant voice, struck up our favourite folk songs."

It was while he was still in the theological seminary that Stalin first became acquainted with the writings of Lenin.

There it was that he first read Lenin's early work. "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats." In 1898 Stalin managed to get hold of "Materials for a Description of Our Economic Development," a volume of articles which had been burnt by the censor. It contained an article by Tulin (Lenin), "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book" (Lenin : "Selected Works," Vol. I).

"I particularly recall an interesting fact," writes Comrade Papanadze, who attended the seminary together with Stalin. "It was in 1898. One morning, after breakfast, I strolled out into Pushkin Square. There I spied Stalin surrounded by a group of our students, with whom he was engaged in a heated argument, criticizing the views of Jordania. They were all drawn into the discussion. Here it was that I first heard about Lenin. The bell rang and we all hurried off to our classes. I was astonished at Joseph's trenchant criticism of Jordania's views, and spoke to him about it. He told me that he had just read Tulin's (Lenin's) article, which he liked very much.

"I must meet him at all costs, he said.

"When, many years later, in 1926, I met Comrade Stalin again, I reminded him of these words uttered in 1898, and he too recalled the incident."

The seminary authorities noticed that Stalin had become a centre of attraction for some of the best and most talented students. They watched his every step and sent in report after report about him. On September 29, 1898, the following report was made to the rector of the seminary: "At 9 p.m. a group of students gathered in the dining-hall around Joseph Djugashvili, who read them books not sanctioned by the seminary authorities, in view of which the students were searched."

There are some very interesting entries in the Conduct Book of the Theological Seminary:

"It appears that Djugashvili has a ticket to the Cheap Library, from which he borrows books. To-day I confiscated Victor Hugo's "Toilers of the Sea," in which I found the said library ticket—S. Murakhovsky, Asst. Supervisor; Father Germogen, Supervisor."

The report bears the note:

"Confine him to the punishment cell for a prolonged period. I have already warned him once about an un-sanctioned book, "Ninety-Three" by Victor Hugo." (Entry made in November, 1896.)

"At 11 p.m. I took away from Joseph Djugashvili Letourneau's "Literary Evolution of the Nations," which he had borrowed from the Cheap Library. The library ticket was found in the book. Djugashvili was discovered reading the said book on the chapel stairs. This is the thirteenth time this student has been discovered reading books borrowed from the Cheap Library. I handed over the book to the Father Supervisor.—S. Murakhovsky, Asst. Supervisor."

The report bears the note:

"On the orders of the Father Rector, confine him to the punishment cell for a prolonged period with a strict warning." (Entry made in March, 1897.)

"In the course of a search of students of the fifth class made by members of the board of supervision, Joseph Djugashvili tried several times to enter into an argument with them, expressing dissatisfaction with the repeated searches of students and declaring that such searches were never made in other seminaries. Djugashvili is generally disrespectful and rude towards persons in authority and systematically refuses to bow to one of the masters. (S. A. Murakhovsky), as the latter has repeatedly complained to the board of supervision.—A. Rzhavensky, Asst. Supervisor."

The report bears the note:

"Reprimanded. Confined to the punishment cell for five hours on the orders of the Father Rector—Father Dimitry." (Entry dated December 16, 1898.)

When Father Dimitry, who was then the seminary

supervisor, entered Stalin's room after one such search. Stalin went on reading as if he had not noticed him. "Don't you see who is standing before you?" the monk demanded.

Stalin rose, rubbing his eyes, "I don't see anything," he said, "except a black spot before my eyes."

On May 27, 1899, this "black spot," Father Dimitry, proposed in the Seminary Council to "expel Joseph Djugashvili as politically unreliable." The proposal was approved. Officially, Stalin was expelled from the seminary for failing to pay tuition fees and for "not attending examination for reasons unknown." But the real reason for his expulsion was his political activities. He was expelled from the seminary as a person who harboured views dangerous to tsarism. We have his own comment on this, made many years later. In 1931, against the item "Education" in a questionnaire submitted to the delegates at a Party Conference of the Stalin District, Moscow, he wrote: "Turned out of a theological seminary for propagating Marxism."

With Stalin's expulsion, the police and gendarmerie began to keep a close watch on him; a dossier was started in which all his movements were recorded. At the time of his expulsion from the seminary, he had already studied Marx's "Capital," besides other Marxist works, had had four years' experience in secret Marxist circles, and had published his first illegal periodical—a students' magazine. He also had a considerable store of knowledge in various social and natural sciences. This store he has kept adding to, and he astonishes even specialists by his extensive knowledge in the most diverse fields.

When Stalin left the seminary he already had a fully-formed Marxist outlook. He was also acquainted with the life of the poor, from whom he had himself sprung. His hatred of the tsarist autocracy and the social system on which tsarism rested grew steadily more intense, and his love for the people ever more profound.

## CHAPTER II

### EARLY ACTIVITIES IN THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

Before speaking of Stalin's early revolutionary activities, I must remind you of what Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan were like in those days.

The economic life of Transcaucasia, which was nothing more than a tsarist colony, was in process of profound change. In his remarkable work, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia" (Lenin: "Selected Work," Vol. I), Lenin refers to the energetic colonization of the Caucasus and the extensive breaking up of new land that accompanied it. ". . . The ancient native 'handicraft' industries were being ousted by the competition of imported Moscow manufactures. . . . Russian capitalism was thus drawing the Caucasus into the world system of commodity circulation, levelling out its local peculiarities—survivals of the ancient self-contained patriarchal system—and creating a market for its own factories. . . . The urban population of the Caucasus increased from 350,000 in 1863 to about 900,000 in 1897."

The oil industry of Transcaucasia developed with particular rapidity, attracting foreign capital on a large scale. "Baku," Stalin says, "did not spring out of the depths of Azerbaijan, but was built from above by the efforts of Nobel, Rothschild, Wischau and others." ("Marxism and the National and Colonial Question," p. 109. English edition, Vol. XII of the Marxist-Leninist Library.)

At the same time, a sharp contrast existed between town and country. While Baku was a large industrial centre, Azerbaijan as a whole was "a country with the most backward, patriarchal-feudal relations" (*ibid.*). It was a tsarist colony in every sense of the word. The numerous nationalities inhabiting the Caucasus suffered from a triple yoke: the brutal exploitation of tsarist military-feudal imperialism, national oppression, and class oppression. Matters reached such a pitch that school-children who spoke in their native language had a sign hung around their necks depicting a dog's head with protruding tongue. The work-

ing population suffered from the class oppression of the landlords and the bourgeoisie. But beneath this oppression the forces of revolution were working and a revolutionary consciousness awakening.

Thanks to Comrade L. Beria's book, we now have a splendid picture of Stalin's work in creating a Bolshevik organization in Transcaucasia. What is more, Beria has disclosed to us little-known sources of information and writings by Stalin which cast a vivid light on an important period of his life. Beria's book, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia," is a valuable contribution to the history of the Communist Party. It has enabled us to form a more profound and complete judgment of the part played by Stalin in the creation of the Bolshevik Party. In this, Beria has done yeoman service, and no historian of the Party can afford to ignore his book.

We learn from Beria's book that in the latter half of the last century a feudal-progressive trend was to be observed in the social movement in Georgia, headed by Ilya Chavchavadze, the writer, and a bourgeois-progressive trend, headed by Georgi Tsereteli. This movement also produced Narodnik trends, curiously modified by local conditions in the Caucasus.

But in the 'nineties there arose a "Third Group," known in Georgian as the Messameh Dassy, testifying to the infiltration of the Marxian ideology among the Georgian intelligentsia. However, the majority of the Messameh Dassy, headed by Noe Jordania\* perceived this ideology through a bourgeois-nationalist prism. Hence their preaching of unity of action between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in Georgia and their claim that the interests of all classes in Georgia were identical.

"A nation united materially is united ideologically also," wrote N. Jordania in his article 'Economic Development and Nationality.' 'Everyone strives to develop national labour, to strengthen the nation. . . . The peasant and worker are just as interested in the greatness of the nation as the bourgeois merchant.'" (Quoted in Beria's "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia." English edition.)

In 1895 Sasha Tsulukidze joined the Messameh Dassy group. Lado Ketskhoveli joined it in 1897 and Stalin in 1898. These three young Marxists, united by the great doctrine of Marx, Engels and Lenin, laid the foundation of a revolutionary Marxist organization in Transcaucasia.

\* NOE JORDANIA. Georgian "Legal Marxist." Maintained that capitalist development was necessary and progressive; it should be achieved through collaboration of workers and capitalists. Advocated the national renaissance of Georgia.

Lado Ketskhoveli will be remembered by posterity as one of the best representatives of Bolshevism. He was devoted heart and soul to the cause of Communism. In conjunction with Stalin and Sasha Tsulukidze, he did tremendous work in creating the first revolutionary Marxist organizations in Transcaucasia and in organizing a secret printing plant. He performed a number of commissions entrusted to him by Lenin relating to the technical side of underground organization. He was feared and hated by the tsarist authorities. On August 17, 1903, he was fired at and killed in his cell by a soldier guarding the prison in which he was confined.

Like Lado Ketskhoveli, Sasha Tsulukidze, despite his poor health and frail physique, was possessed of an unusually ardent revolutionary temperament and was also thoroughly devoted to the cause of revolution. Together with Stalin, he took part in a number of debates with the Mensheviks. He contributed a number of articles to illegal publications, written in a consistent Marxist-Leninist vein. He died of consumption in 1905.

This group of revolutionary Marxists came into conflict from the very outset with the opportunist majority in the Messameh Dassy.

An important part in forming the views of Stalin, Sasha Tsulukidze and Lado Ketskhoveli was played by the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class.\* We find Lenin's name being mentioned more and more frequently in the debates and in the circles. The reverberations of the organized workers' movement led by the St. Petersburg League of Struggle stirred up the masses in other industrial centres. They had a similar effect in Transcaucasia, where in the latter half, and especially the end, of the 'nineties we observe the rise of an organized workers' movement. In 1900, V. Kurnatovsky, one of Lenin's colleagues, came to Tiflis. Kurnatovsky was a loyal and militant supporter of Lenin. He had had vast experience in the revolutionary movement and was a highly educated Marxist. He had been one of the signatories to the protest of the seventeen Social-Democrats against the "Economists,"\*\* of which Lenin was the author.

\* ST. PETERSBURG LEAGUE OF STRUGGLE FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKING CLASS. Under Lenin's guidance this was the first organization in Russia to link up the struggle of the working class for better economic conditions with the political struggle against tsarism. In Lenin's words it was the first "rudiment of a revolutionary party which was backed by the working-class movement."

\*\* THE ECONOMISTS. Believed that the Russian masses—workers and peasants—were too backward to engage in politics, that the pace should be set by the slowest. Lenin described them as "Khvostists," from the Russian word "khvost" meaning tail, because their policy meant that the Party would follow behind instead of leading the working

The difference which at that time had arisen in other Social-Democratic organizations were also splitting the Messameh Dassy into an opportunist majority, on the one hand, and a young revolutionary wing, headed by Stalin, on the other.

The first difference arose over the need for an illegal revolutionary newspaper. Stalin, Ketskhoveli and Tsulukidze insisted that such a newspaper be started.

The second difference related to the need for starting mass agitation. The opportunist majority continued to maintain that only propaganda within the bounds of the law should be conducted ; it feared a resort to mass agitation, for that would be exceeding legal bounds and adopting the path of revolution. But the movement was straining at the old fetters ; it had outgrown the propaganda circles. The need for mass agitation was making itself felt more and more keenly. This was figuratively expressed by Juvenaly Melnikov, a Ukrainian propagandist of that period, who said that "it is better to raise the masses one inch than to raise one man a whole storey."

A mass movement was developing at that time among the workers of Tiflis. Stalin was conducting several Marxist workers' circles, for he attributed the utmost importance to educating the advanced workers in the revolutionary spirit. Sylvestre Todria, who was a member of one of Stalin's secret workers' circles, recalls being asked by him on one occasion what they taught in the legally-sanctioned Sunday school run by the opportunist majority of the Messameh Dassy.

"When I told him," writes Todria, "that they explain how the sun moves, he replied with a smile, 'Listen, friend, don't you worry about the sun ; it will not stray from its orbit. What you had better learn is how the revolutionary cause should move, and help me to arrange a little illegal printing plant.'"

Another worker, by the name of Georgi Ninua, who attended one of Stalin's circles, relates :

"Comrade Stalin conducted our circle for over two years. Whatever the subject he was lecturing on, he would always divide it into themes. He had a splendid knowledge of the history of the working-class movement in the West and of revolutionary Social-Democratic theory, and his talks at once riveted the attention of the workers. Stalin would quote from fiction and scientific works ; he was always citing examples. When addressing us, he had a notebook before him or just a sheet of paper covered with

class. Their name is derived from their theory that the working class should concern itself only with economic issues, wages, hours, conditions, leaving the political struggle against the tsar to the Liberal Capitalists."

fine writing. It was obvious that he carefully prepared for every talk. We usually met in the evenings, at dusk, and on Sundays would go out into the country in groups of five to ten and would carry on our discussions without regard for time.

"Comrade Stalin's lectures were more in the nature of informal talks. As a rule, he would not pass to another subject until he was satisfied that we had fully understood the first. When replying to his questions, we would cite facts from our own lives as workers, recount what happened in the factories and how we were exploited by the management, the contractors and the foremen. Whenever such subjects were touched on, Comrade Stalin would show a particularly keen interest. He would put many questions to the workers and then draw conclusions. These conclusions were of the highest value and significance to the revolutionary movement.

"Comrade Stalin was our teacher, but he would often say that he himself learnt from the workers."

In 1898 the railway shops and a number of other plants in Tiflis went on strike. These strikes were led by a group of revolutionary Social-Democrats headed by Stalin and Lado Ketskhoveli. In 1899 the first revolutionary celebration of May Day was held by the Tiflis workers. A tram strike in Tiflis at the end of 1899 terminated in a victory for the workers. And on May 1, 1900, Stalin addressed a revolutionary May Day meeting attended by about five hundred workers.

To-day, of course, there is nothing extraordinary in a meeting of five hundred workers. But that was the first meeting of its size in Tiflis, and it was the first speech Stalin made at a mass meeting of workers.

On April 22, 1901, there was a demonstration of some two thousand workers directed by Stalin. It was savagely attacked by the tsarist authorities. Lenin's "Iskra" ("The Spark"), referred to this demonstration as an epoch-making event in the history of the Caucasus. "This day marks the inception of an open revolutionary movement in the Caucasus," says Beria in his book "Lado Ketskhoveli."

From December 28, 1899, to March 21, 1901, when Stalin was obliged to go into hiding in order to escape persecution, he earned his living as an observer in the Tiflis geophysical observatory. The memoirs of Vano Ketskhoveli, entitled "The Dawn of the Working-Class Party" and published in the "Zarya Vostoka" ("Dawn of the East"), tells of this period of Stalin's life.

"At the end of December, 1899," Vano Ketskhoveli relates, "there was a vacancy for an observer in the observatory and, on Lado's advice, Comrade Stalin applied

for it. We had to keep awake all night and make observations at stated intervals with the help of intricate instruments. The work demanded great nervous concentration and patience. The post of observer was always falling vacant, and that explains the comparative ease with which I, then Comrade Stalin, then M. Davitashvili, and finally Vaso Berzenishvili, who had also left the seminary at the beginning of 1900, found jobs at the observatory."

In addition to the reminiscences of Vano Ketskhoveli, we have those of Vaso Berzenishvili relating to the period of Stalin's life when he worked in the observatory.

"We used to get books from second-hand dealers and from the Kaidanova library on Kirochnaya Street," Berzenishvili relates. "This library did us yeoman service. Comrade Stalin also used to procure illegal pamphlets and the "Iskra," and let us read them; but where and from whom he got them none of us knew. Comrade Stalin would not even tell his friends where he spent his time. But I knew, because I had attended the illegal workers' circles several times."

In 1901, on the initiative of Stalin and Lado Ketskhoveli, an illegal printing plant was started in Baku, and in September of the same year the first Georgian illegal newspaper, "Brdzola" ("The Struggle"), the organ of the Tiflis revolutionary Social-Democrats, began to appear in Tiflis. This was a newspaper of the Leninist "Iskra" trend. It advocated the broad development of agitational work and called upon the workers to take up the struggle against the tsar, the landlords and the capitalists. It proclaimed the indivisible unity of the ranks of the working class of all Russia in the fight for Socialism.

In an editorial in its first issue, the "Brdzola" declared that "the Georgian Social-Democratic movement goes hand in hand with the entire Russian movement and consequently subordinates itself to the Russian Social-Democratic Party." (L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia.")

The "Brdzola" advocated the ideas of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It fought the "legal Marxists"\*\* and the "Economists." It insisted on the need for an open revolutionary struggle of the working class. It stood for the hegemony of the proletariat in the coming bourgeois-democratic revolution, and it attacked the opportunist

\* LEGAL MARXISTS. So called because they did not belong to or work in the Marxist organizations which were illegal under the tsar. They advocated the capitalist system as the most suitable for Russia, seeing capitalism as an advance on the feudal conditions which still survived; but they were against the further advance towards the Socialist Revolution.

Bernsteinist<sup>3</sup> views as expounded, among others, by Jordania and Chkheidze. The leading articles in this newspaper were written by Stalin and Lado Ketskhoveli.

On March 21, 1901, in the absence of Stalin, the apartment in which he and Berzenishvili lived was searched by the police. Berzenishvili writes:

"They burst into the room, asked who I was, who else lived in the apartment, and began their search. They first ransacked my room, packed up and sealed certain legal publications of a Marxist trend, drew up a protocol and gave it to me to sign. They then proceeded to Comrade Stalin's room. They turned everything upside down, poked into every corner, shook out the bedding—but found nothing. Comrade Stalin would always return a book after reading it and never kept it at home. As to illegal pamphlets, we used to keep them concealed under a brick pile on the banks of the River Kura. Comrade Stalin was very cautious in this respect. After searching the second room, they again drew up a protocol, and went away empty-handed.

On November 11, 1901, in Avlabar, the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization held its first conference. It was attended by twenty-five delegates and elected the first Tiflis Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.<sup>\*\*</sup> Stalin was elected a member of this Committee. Towards the end of 1901 the Tiflis Committee decided to send him to Batum to form a Social-Democratic organization there. This was the beginning of the Batum period of his activities.

Prior to this, Carlo Chkheidze and other "legal Marxists" had been active in Batum. Chkheidze assured Stalin that it was impossible to create a revolutionary organization in Batum. He even tried to persuade him to leave the city, but Stalin knew better than Chkheidze what forces were latent in the working-class and what had to be done. He took up his quarters in the working-class district of Chaoba (now the Stalin District) and energetically com-

\* BERNSTEINIST. Bernstein, a German Social-Democrat who, in the eighteen nineties, advocated a collaboration between the capitalists and the working class which would bring about the peaceful evolution of Socialism.

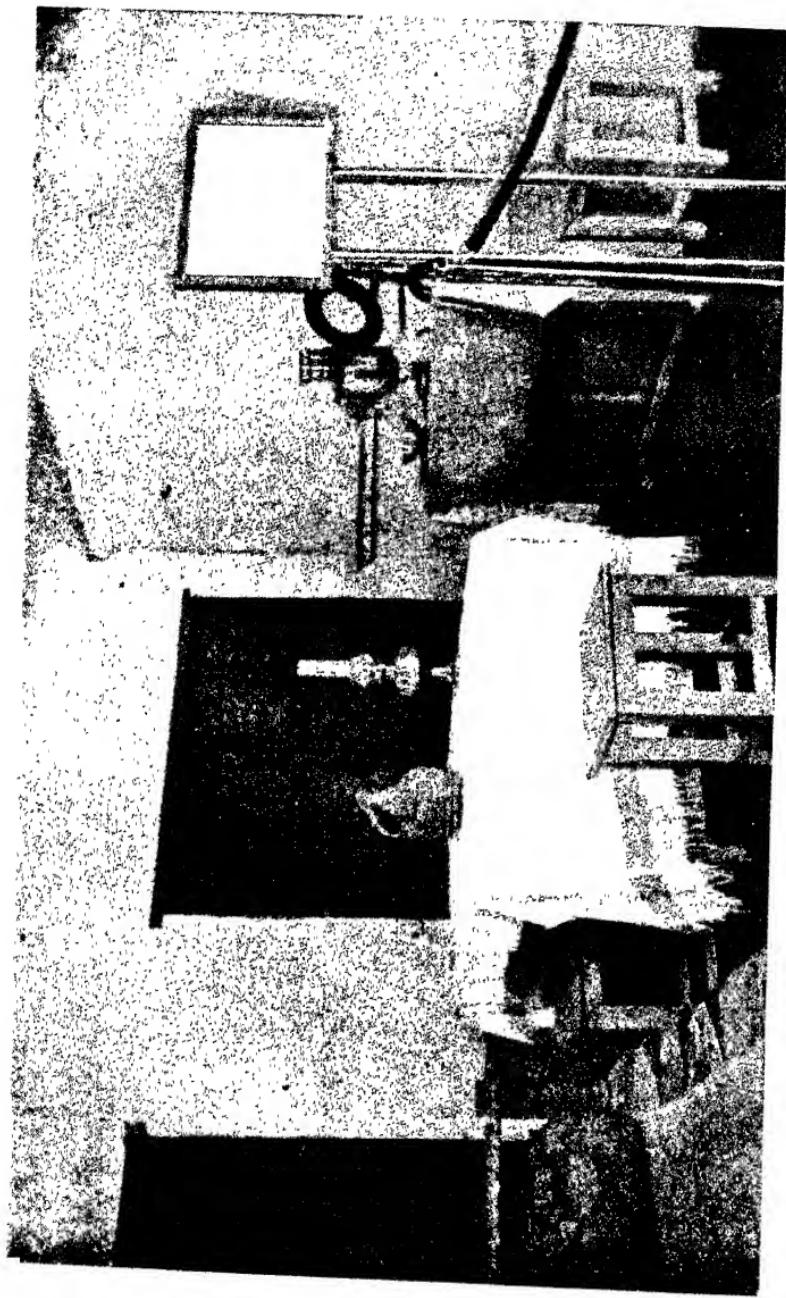
\*\* R.S.D.L.P. Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. Founded 1898. Composed of several groups, the Bund, the Leagues of Struggle, etc. Lenin was among the founders. Two trends appeared in 1903 which split the Party into majority (Bolsheviks) and minority (Mensheviks). Lenin led the majority. The minority refused to attend the next Congress (1905). In 1908 Unit was re-established, but only on paper; the Bolsheviks continued to be the revolutionary section working in revolutionary organizations, the Mensheviks remained apart. They continued to press for the abandonment of the Bolshevik organizations and policies, until in 1912 the Party split completely into two sections by the expulsion of the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks continued to use the name of R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) till March, 1918, when at the Seventh Party Congress, on Lenin's proposal, the name was changed to Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). In 1922 on the formation of the Soviet Union, the name became Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks).



Stalin in 1893.



The House in Gori where Stalin was born.



The room where J. Stalin was born and lived, Gori, Georgian S.S.R.

menced party work. Batum was a big working-class centre with several large oil refineries belonging to Mantashev, Sideridis, Rothschild and Nobel. Stalin eagerly set about organizing circles of advanced workers at these plants to help him in his activities. He himself carried on propaganda among them. He also organized a secret printing plant, himself writing leaflets and printing them with the help of the workers. The Batum secret police reported at this period that the workers had a profound respect for Joseph Djugashvili and looked upon him as their teacher.

"... The development of the Social-Democratic movement," one such report states, "has made great progress since the autumn of 1901, when the Tiflis Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. sent one of its members, Joseph Djugashvili, a former sixth-class student of the Tiflis Theological Seminary, to Batum to carry on propaganda among the factory workers. Thanks to Djugashvili's activities, Social-Democratic organizations have begun to spring up in all the Batum plants <sup>at first</sup> directed by the Tiflis Committee."

On the night of December 31, 1901, Stalin called a conference of workers' circles under the guise of a New Year's party, which was attended by about thirty persons. At this conference was formed the Batum Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.—<sup>the</sup> first *Iskra*-ist Social-Democratic organization in Batum.

There are very moving reminiscences of this conference recounted by old workers of Transcaucasia. One of them, Rodion Korkia, relates that Stalin ended his speech with the words: "See, the day is already dawning! Soon the sun will rise. That sun will shine for us. Believe my words, comrades!"

With the help of the newly-formed workers' organizations, the Batum Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. launched a number of strikes in that city in the beginning of 1902. The strike committees at the plants were directed by Stalin and the strikes grew more and more stubborn. The tsarist authorities became alarmed and appointed a military governor over Batum. The governor tried to intimidate the workers into calling off the strikes, but all to no purpose. Nor were the mass arrests effected on the night of March 7 of any avail. On March 8, 1902, there was a mass demonstration of workers organized by Stalin. The workers demanded the release of the arrested men, but instead of meeting the demand, the police arrested over three hundred of the demonstrators. On March 9, Stalin organized an even more impressive demonstration, in which not only the workers on strike in the Rothschild and Mantashev plants took part, but also the dockers, railwaymen and other workers. Singing revolutionary songs and carrying

red banners, the demonstration marched to the deportation barracks, where the arrested men were held prisoner, and demanded their release. Fire was opened on the demonstration; fifteen workers were killed and fifty-four wounded. I. Darakhvelidze, an old Batum worker, relates:

"Comrade Soso (Stalin) stood in the midst of the turbulent sea of workers, personally directing the movement. A worker named Kalandadze, who was wounded in the arm during the firing, was led out of the crowd and afterwards taken home by Comrade Stalin himself."

On March 12, Stalin arranged a revolutionary funeral of the workers killed on March 9. In spite of the recent shooting, huge numbers of workers attended the funeral. A leaflet written by Stalin and widely distributed both in Batum and in other cities was filled with revolutionary fire and passion: "All honour to you who have laid down your lives for the truth! All honour to the breasts that suckled you! All honour to you whose brows are adorned with the crown of the martyrs, and who with pale and faltering lips breathed words of struggle in your hour of death! All honour to your shades that hover over us and whisper in our ears. 'Avenge our blood!'"

Stalin at first lived in the house of Mate Rusidze, and then moved to the house of a peasant by the name of Khashim Smyrba. In her "Tale of the Unforgettable," printed in the "Zarya Vostoka" Ninutsa Modebadze gives us the following picture of the conditions in which Stalin worked:

"Comrade Stalin lived in the home of Mate Rusidze. Two rooms were occupied by the Darakhvelidze brothers and Kotsia Kandilaki, while Comrade Stalin occupied a small adjacent room. This room had no window; the outer door was always padlocked and did not attract attention. The niche between the outer and inner doors (the latter having been removed) was hung with clothes and resembled a cupboard in the wall.

"The other half of the house was occupied by Ivilian and Despine Shapatava.

"A printing press was installed in Stalin's room. Here he worked, and here his leaflets were printed. Here, too, advanced workers used to foregather for conferences in the dead of night.

"My sister, Despine, would often carry round the leaflets to reliable comrades. Comrade Stalin used to draw women into revolutionary work and converse with them on revolutionary subjects."

Stalin installed a secret printing plant in Batum in the house of Khashim Smyrba. This Abkhassian peasant was a simple man who was not even able to read, but he used to carry around the leaflets written and printed by Stalin

concealed in baskets of fruit. Hundreds of simple folk—workers and peasants—helped Stalin in his revolutionary activities. The close link always maintained between the masses and Stalin, the professional underground revolutionary, the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist, was in itself a source of real strength.

On April 5, 1902, during a meeting of the leading Party group, Stalin was arrested by the tsarist police and consigned to Batum prison. But neither in this prison nor in the Kutais prison, to which he was transferred, did he discontinue his revolutionary activities. He managed to establish contact from prison with his comrades still at liberty, and assisted them in the same way that Lenin assisted his comrades from prison. At the same time Stalin worked energetically among the political prisoners. He helped them to understand the great teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin. The tsarist government convicted him on the charge of being the chief leader and teacher in the revolutionary movement of the Batum workers. He was also convicted in the case of the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization.

In February, 1903, the first congress of the Caucasian Social-Democratic organization was held, at which the Caucasian Federal Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. was formed. Confined behind prison walls, Stalin was elected a member of the Caucasian Federal Committee in his absence.

On July 9, 1903, the "decision of His Imperial Majesty" was promulgated sentencing Stalin to exile in Eastern Siberia for three years under open police surveillance. Before leaving for exile, he was again transferred to the Batum prison, and it was only towards the end of November, 1903, that he was sent off to Eastern Siberia, to the village of Novaya Uda, Balagansk District, in the Province of Irkutsk. Many have undoubtedly seen the picture of Stalin during this period of exile painted recently by one of our self-taught artists. He is shown wearing felt boots, winter overcoat and fur cap, all covered with snow, standing on a high bluff and gazing longingly into the distance where lived the men and women with whom he had worked.

At the time of his first exile, Stalin was already a prominent organizer and an outstanding leader of the masses. He had become the leader of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks, but his tremendous prestige was not confined to Transcaucasia. One of his great services at this period was the formation, in conjunction with Lado Ketskhoveli, Sasha Tsulukidze, Mikha Tskhakaya and a number of other comrades, of the first of the *Iskra*-ist Social-Democratic committees, the publication of the first illegal literature.

rature and the organization of the first secret printing plants in Transcaucasia. Another of his services at this period was his struggle against the legalists, the "Economists" and the nationalists, a struggle which he waged with as much vigour and energy as Lenin.

It was during this exile, in 1903, that Stalin and Lenin first became acquainted by correspondence. Recalling this period when addressing the Lenin memorial meeting at the Kremlin Military School on January 28, 1924, Stalin said:

"I first became acquainted with Lenin in 1903. True, it was not a personal acquaintance; it was maintained by correspondence. But it made an indelible impression upon me, one which has never left me throughout all my work in the Party. I was in exile in Siberia at the time. My knowledge of Lenin's revolutionary activities since the end of the 'nineties, and especially after 1901, after the appearance of *Iskra*, had convinced me that in Lenin we had a man of extraordinary calibre. I did not regard him as a mere leader of the Party, but as its actual founder, for he alone understood the inner essence and urgent needs of our Party. When I compared him with the other leaders of our Party, it always seemed to me that he was head and shoulders above his colleagues—Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and the others; that, compared with them, Lenin was not just one of the leaders, but a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle, and who boldly led the Party forward along the unexplored paths of the Russian revolutionary movement. This impression took such a deep hold of me that I felt impelled to write about it to a close friend of mine who was living as a political exile abroad, requesting him to give me his opinion. Some time later, when I was already in exile in Siberia—this was at the end of 1903—I received an enthusiastic letter from my friend and a simple, but profoundly expressive, letter from Lenin, to whom, it appeared, my friend had shown my letter. Lenin's note was comparatively short, but it contained a bold and fearless criticism of the practical work of our Party, and a remarkably clear and concise account of the entire plan of work of the Party in the immediate future. Only Lenin could write of the most intricate things so simply and clearly, so concisely and boldly that every sentence did not so much speak as ring like a rifle shot. This simple and bold letter strengthened my opinion that Lenin was the mountain eagle of our Party. I cannot forgive myself for having, from the habit of an old underground worker, consigned this letter of Lenin's, like many other letters, to the flames.

My acquaintance with Lenin dates from that time." ("Stalin on Lenin").

A careful study of Stalin's early revolutionary activities shows that from the end of the 'nineties they were closely interwoven with the activities of the founder of our Party—Lenin. There were many occasions when Stalin had to issue slogans and find solutions to theoretical problems quite independently; and in all his activities we detect the same underlying principles, the same line of consistent revolutionary Marxism that we find in Lenin. In this preparatory period, the eve of the first Russian revolution, Stalin's activities in Transcaucasia were wholly directed towards ensuring the hegemony of the working class in the coming revolution.

In the spring of 1904 Stalin escaped from his place of exile in Irkutsk and returned to Batum, but was very soon obliged to leave that city. This is what Natalia Kirtadze says in her reminiscences of Stalin's return from exile:

"One night in the early part of 1904, there was a knock at my door. It was already past midnight.

" 'Who's there?' I called.

" 'It's me, let me in.'

" 'Who are you?'

" 'It's me, Soso.'

"It seemed so incredible that I would not open the door until he had given the password: 'Long live a thousand times!'

"I asked him how he came to be in Batum.

" 'I escaped', Soso replied.

"Soon after, he left for Tiflis, from where he wrote to us several times. Comrade Stalin was then directing the activities of the Caucasian Federal Committee.

"In the spring of 1904, Soso again returned to Batum. During this stay he conducted several debates with the Mensheviks in the house of Iliko Sharashidze in Bartz-khana."

## CHAPTER III

### ACTIVITIES DURING THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The revolutionary movement in Transcaucasia, led by the Bolshevik organizations, played a big part in the development of the first Russian revolution. The mighty revolutionary energy which had been dammed up by the tsarist autocracy broke its banks, and in the towns and villages of Georgia assumed the form of an impetuous mass movement, of a genuine movement of the people. The anger of the Georgian masses which had been accumulating for centuries against their oppressors, their hatred for the landlords, capitalists and tsarist officials found expression in revolutionary uprisings in the towns and in the countryside.

A most important role in the leadership of this movement, in the political education of the masses, was played by Stalin. As we know, he was exiled to Siberia in 1903, but in January, 1904, he escaped and returned to Tiflis, where he assumed the leadership of the Bolshevik organizations of Transcaucasia. This was the period in which the Bolshevik Party was taking more and more definite shape organizationally, ideologically and politically, following the split at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.\*.

In all the work of Stalin and Lenin we perceive the closest affinity of ideas. And this affinity is invariably to be observed whenever Stalin had to decide independently what course to take amid the rapidly changing events.

At this period a number of Lenin's writings helped the working class to adopt a correct position on all questions relating to the theory and practice of revolution. His book "What Is To Be Done?" (Little Lenin Library. Vol. 4), helped to prepare the Party ideologically; his "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back" (English Edition, Lawrence and Wishart), developed the principles of organization; his "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" was a political education in the fundamental problems of working-class strategy and tactics. Similarly, a number of writings by Stalin in the period of the first Russian revolution helped the ideological, organizational

\* The Split in the R.S.D.L.P. See note to page 15.

and political training of the Bolshevik organization in Transcaucasia. Furthermore, the writings of Stalin not only popularized the ideas of Lenin, the ideas of Marx and Engels, but developed a number of problems independently. Taken together, his theoretical writings of this period—as, for example, "A Glance at the Disagreements in the Party," written at the beginning of 1905, the article "Two Conflicts," published in January, 1906, a series of articles under the general title "Anarchism or Socialism" printed in the newspapers "Akhali Tskhovreba" ("The New Life"), "Akhali Droyeba" ("The New Times"), "Chveni Tskhovreba" ("The Times"), "Dro" ("The Times") and a number of other articles—give a developed exposition of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism on the principles of dialectical and historical materialism, and on the principles of Bolshevik strategy, tactics and organization.

Thus, in the period of the first Russian revolution Stalin worked hand in hand with Lenin in hammering out the Bolshevik line.

It should be mentioned that a highly important factor in the activities of the Bolshevik organizations in Transcaucasia—and not in Transcaucasia alone—was the secret printing press in Avlabar. This printing press was set up on Stalin's instructions, and its excellent organization singled it out from all the known illegal printing presses. For long the police were unable to discover its whereabouts, and it was only on April 15, 1906, that it was seized by the authorities. On this press were printed the following proclamations and leaflets, most of which were written by Stalin: "To the Caucasian Workers," "What Are the Facts?" "Workers of the Caucasus, It is Time for Revenge!" "To the Organized Workers of Tiflis," "To the New Recruits," "Comrades!" "The Beast at Bay," "Down With the War!" "To All Working Men, Working Women and Peasants of the Caucasus," "To the Reservists," "The Autocracy and the Armenians," "Social-Democrats on Trial," "To the Workers," "To the Kakhetino-Kartalian Peasants," "Brother Soldiers!" "The Latest News," "To the Workers of the First District," and "Conditions of Labour at the Pridonov and Co. Confectionery Factory."

This press also printed pamphlets in Russian, Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijanian, which were circulated not only among the Transcaucasian, but among other Party organizations of Russia as well.

Here is a list of pamphlets printed on the Avlabar press: Lenin, "A Revolutionary-Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry;" Lenin, "To the Rural Poor" (Lenin: Selected Works, Vol. II); Stalin, "A Glance at the Disagreements in the Party;" Stalin, "Two Con-

flicts;" Stalin, "Statement Regarding the All-Russian Conferences of the Minority and Majority;" also "The Peasant Movement in Guria;" "Four Brothers;" "The Working Day;" "May Day;" "What Every Worker Should Know and Remember;" "Socialism;" "The New Path;" "Statement Regarding the Third Party Congress, Together with the Party Rules and Congress Resolutions;" "Rules of the R.S.D.L.P. Adopted at the Third Congress;" "Program of the R.S.D.L.P. Adopted at the Second Congress;" "Spiders and Flies;" "Revolutionary Songs;" "The Workers and the Political System in Russia;" "Our Demands—Immediate and Ultimate."

The tsarist government regarded it as a big victory when the Avlabar printing plant was discovered. We can get an idea of the plant from the following account which appeared in the bourgeois newspaper *Kavkaz* ("Caucasus") of April 16, 1906:

"Secret Printing Plant." On Saturday, April 15, in the courtyard of an uninhabited detached house belonging to D. Rostomashvili in Avlabar, some 150 or 200 paces from the City Hospital for Contagious Diseases, a well was discovered some seventy feet deep, which could be descended by means of a rope and pulley. At a depth of about fifty feet there was a gallery leading to another well, in which there was a ladder about thirty-five feet high giving access to a vault situated beneath the cellar of the house. In this vault a fully-equipped printing plant has been discovered with twenty cases of Russian, Georgian and Armenian type, a hand-press costing between 1,500 and 2,000 rubles, various acids, blasting gelatine and other paraphernalia for the manufacture of bombs, a large quantity of illegal literature, the seals of various regiments and government institutions, as well as an infernal machine containing 15 lbs. of dynamite. The establishment was illuminated by acetylene lamps and was fitted up with an electric signalling system. In a shed in the courtyard of the house, three live bombs, bomb casings and similar material have been found. Twenty-four persons have been arrested at a meeting in the editorial offices of the newspaper "Elva" ("Lightning") and charged with being implicated in this affair. A search of the "Elva" offices revealed a large quantity of illegal literature and leaflets, as well as about twenty blank passport forms. The editorial offices have been sealed up. Since electric wires have been discovered issuing from the secret printing plant in various directions, excavations are being made in the hope of discovering other underground premises. The equipment discovered in this printing plant was removed in five carts. That same evening three other persons were ar-

rested in connection with this affair. All the way to the prison the arrested men kept singing the *Marseillaise*."

The facts revealed in the case of the Avlabar printing plant give us an idea of the tremendously varied work undertaken by Stalin in the period of the first revolution.

As we know, Stalin was unable to attend the Second Party Congress because he was in exile, but when he returned he vigorously set to work to secure the convocation of the Third Party Congress. He combated the conciliators on the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., and when he grew convinced that they were hand in glove with the Mensheviks in sabotaging the demand for the convocation of the Third Congress, he broke with the Menshevik-conciliationist Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. He exposed the duplicity of Glebov (Noskov), who had been elected to the Central Committee at the Second Congress as a Bolshevik, but then betrayed the Bolsheviks and helped the Mensheviks to seize the Central Committee and the Central Organ of the Party.

In November, 1904, a Bolshevik Conference of the Caucasian Committees met in Tiflis, presided over by Stalin. This conference called for the convocation of the Third Party Congress, pointing out that the Congress was essential both because it was necessary to establish peace in the Party and "because of the conditions of the present historical moment, which require exceptional unanimity and unity of action on the part of the individual sections of the Party for a decisive onslaught against the tsarist autocracy." (L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia.")

In the years 1905-07, Mikha Tskhakaya worked hand in hand with Stalin in guiding the Caucasian Federal Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. Other members of this Committee were Sasha Tsulukidze, Stepan Shaumyan, Alyosha Djaparidze, Bogdan Knuniyantz, Philip Makharadze and Mikho Bochoridze.

In this struggle for a Bolshevik Party Stalin revealed himself as an organizer of outstanding talent, as an indefatigable propagandist of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and a prominent theoretician of scientific Socialism. The Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia had to wage a severe struggle against the Mensheviks, who were led by men like Jordania, Tsereteli, Ramishvili, Chkheidze and Lomtatidze.

Stalin and other Bolsheviks constantly toured the cities and other large centres of Transcaucasia, debating with Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Anarchists. Stalin himself visited the chief centres of the movement —Tiflis, Baku, Kutais, Gori, Chiaturi, Khoni, Borchalo and other places. During these tours he not only debated with

Mensheviks and other opponents of the consistent Marxist-Leninist line, but also carried on extensive organizational work. In Chiaturi, for example, he formed a Bolshevik regional committee of the Party. On his initiative, a Bolshevik Imeretino-Mingrelian Committee was formed in Kutais to direct the Party organizations of the former Kutais Province. Following a debate with the Mensheviks in the Khoni District, a Bolshevik Committee was set up at Khoni. In these debates with the opponents of Bolshevism, Stalin astonished his auditors by his calm restraint and manifest confidence in the justice and strength of his cause. Thus, in May, 1905, he spoke at a huge meeting attended by some two thousand workers at which a debate took place with Anarchists, followers of Kropotkin—Gogelia, Tsereteli and others. Kekelidze, who was present at this meeting, relates: "The meeting opens. Koba (Stalin) speaks first. A long debate ensues . . . Whereas each of his opponents stormed and raved, Comrade Koba calmly but firmly shattered and demolished all their arguments. So, here too, the Bolsheviks were victorious: the workers supported Comrade Koba unanimously." (Quoted in L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia.")

In December, 1904, the famous Baku strike broke out, which was the herald of the first Russian revolution. This action of the Baku proletariat served as the signal for the glorious actions in January and February, 1905, all over Russia. At the end of 1904 the Baku workers secured the conclusion of a collective bargaining agreement, the first of its kind in the history of the Russian labour movement. The working masses entered the first revolution under the slogans of the Bolsheviks, rejecting the slogans of the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Anarchists, Cadets and Dashnaks.\*

All the fundamental problems of the struggle—organizational, theoretical, political and tactical—were explained to the workers by Stalin in his speeches, leaflets, pamphlets and numerous articles. At this time he was already a talented propagandist, able to explain the most difficult and intricate questions to the workers in a clear and comprehensible way. While his expositions were a model of simplicity, he always condemned over-simplification, simplification carried to the point of vulgarization.

This, for instance, is how he explained the principle that changes in ideology never keep pace with changes in

\* **DASHNAKS.** Dashnaktsuyum Party. Armenian Nationalist, non-working class party. Formed in eighteen-nineties, it supported the interests of the Armenian capitalists; after the Revolution it supported the French, British and tsarist interventionists against the Soviet Government.

the material conditions of life. Imagine, he said, a shoemaker who once had his own tiny workshop, but, being unable to stand the competition of the big man, is forced to close down and take a job, let us say, with Adelkhanov. He goes to work in Adelkhanov's factory, not with the idea of becoming a permanent wage worker, but in order to pinch and squeeze and save up enough money to open his own workshop again. As you see, the status of this shoemaker is already that of a proletarian; his mentality, however, is not yet proletarian, but thoroughly petty-bourgeois. His non-proletarian status is already a thing of the past, but his petty-bourgeois mentality still persists; it has not kept pace with his new social status. Thus it is the external conditions, the mode of life of men, that change first; then their mentality changes in conformity with the changed conditions.

It should now be easy to understand how important materialist theory is for man's practical activities. Since it is a man's economic conditions that change first, and his mentality only afterwards, in conformity with the economic changes, it is clear that we must seek for the basis of any particular ideal not in people's minds or imaginations, but in the development of economic conditions. Only those ideals are suitable and tenable which are based on a study of economic conditions, and all ideals which ignore economic conditions, which do not take account of the development of economic conditions, are unsuitable and untenable.

If man's mentality, morals and habits spring from external conditions, if legal and political forms are unsuitable because of their economic implications, it is clear that in order to bring about a fundamental change in the morals, habits and political system of a people we must help to bring about a fundamental change in economic relationships.

Thus we see how Stalin, proceeding from the particular case of a shoemaking who has lost his economic independence, was able to explain profound and far-reaching philosophical generalizations.

Here is another example. Stalin was criticizing the theory known as economic materialism. He asked the advocates of this vulgar materialism where, when, on what planet, and by which Marx was it said that "man's ideology is determined by the food he eats." He challenged his opponents to cite a single statement, a single passage from the works of Marx in support of their contentions. True, Marx did say that man's mentality, his ideology, is determined by economic conditions. But where did he say that economic conditions and food are one and the same?

thing? Was it not obvious that a physiological category like food was completely different from a sociological category?

Stalin fought consistently against what was called "Zubatovism"; an attempt to introduce amongst the workers trade unions run by the police, which, under the leadership of the brothers Shendrikov, had gained a foothold in Baku.

Of outstanding importance were his activities in preparing for armed insurrection, in which he attributed the utmost importance to the arming of the workers. He assisted Kamo Petrosyan, the famous Caucasian hero, in organizing the supply of arms.

At the Third Party Congress, the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks were represented by Comrade Mikha Tskhakaya, who reported on the revolutionary movement in the Caucasus. The Congress passed a special resolution dealing with the events in the Caucasus, which ran:

"Whereas

" 1) the special social and political conditions prevailing in the Caucasus have favoured the formation there of the most militant organizations of our Party;

" 2) the revolutionary movement among the majority of both the urban and the rural population of the Caucasus has already reached the pitch of a countrywide uprising against the autocracy;

" 3) the autocratic government is already dispatching troops and artillery to Guria in preparation for the most ruthless suppression of all the important centres of the uprising;

" 4) a victory for the autocracy over a popular uprising in the Caucasus, which may be facilitated by the fact that the population consists of non-Russian nationalities, would be extremely detrimental to the success of the uprising in Russia generally;

"Therefore the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., speaking in the name of the class-conscious proletariat of Russia, sends ardent greetings to the heroic proletariat and peasantry of the Caucasus, and instructs the Central Committee and the local committees of the Party to take energetic measures to ensure the most widespread dissemination of information regarding the situation in the Caucasus by means of pamphlets, meetings, workers' assemblies, group discussions, etc., and also to give timely support to the Caucasus by every means at their disposal."

When Sasha Tsulukidze died in the summer of 1905, Stalin delivered an address at his graveside which made an indelible impression on all who heard it.

A most important part in the formation of the Bol-

shevik organizations and of the Bolshevik ideology in Transcaucasia was played by the newspaper "Proletariatis Brdzola" ("The Struggle of the Proletariat"), founded by Stalin and printed on the secret Avlabar printing press. Some of the articles in this newspaper were reprinted by Lenin in the Proletary ("The Proletarian"), the central organ of the Bolsheviks.

The seventh issue of the "Proletariatis Brdzola," September 1, 1904, contains a very fine article entitled "The Social-Democratic View on the National Question." It has a very close affinity with Stalin's classical work, "Marxism and the National Question," written at a later date. The article points out that at different times nationalism serves different interests and assumes different hues, depending on which class gives it prominence, and when.

He combated the federalist tendencies of the bourgeois nationalists, which the Mensheviks shared. He argued that the victory of the proletariat demanded the unity of all workers, irrespective of nationality, and that national partitions must be broken down and the Russian, Georgian, Armenian, Polish, Jewish and other proletarians closely amalgamated as an essential condition for the victory of the proletariat all over Russia. In opposition to the policy of the federalists, which would set up partitions between the working people of the various nationalities (between the Georgians and Armenians), Stalin called for closer unity, closer contact between the proletarians of the various nationalities of Russia. Step by step, he proved the falsity of the federalists' arguments. In 1905 he upheld the demand for the right of nations to self-determination and carried on a controversy with the Georgian periodical "Sakartvelo," which claimed to be a Socialist organ while in reality advocating a bourgeois-nationalist programme.

The federalists in Transcaucasia pursued roughly the same policy as the Bund and the Polish Socialist Party in Poland: they were out for a party organization built on national lines and rejected the centralist principle of organization. Stalin called for a bold struggle against all nationalist divisions and for the creation of a single workers' party.

When the first Russian revolution broke out, the Avlabar printing plant issued a fiery proclamation in the name of the Caucasian Federal Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., entitled "Workers of the Caucasus! It Is Time For Revenge!" It pointed out that the storm was rising that heralded the dawn, and that the moment was not far off when the Russian revolution would sweep the sinister throne of the tsar from the face of the earth. For that moment the proclamation called upon the people to prepare.

"Proletariatis Brdzola" waged a constant struggle against the bourgeois liberals. Its eighth issue contains an article entitled "They Have Dropped the Mask" attacking the constitution proposed by the bourgeois liberals and giving a profound analysis of their subtle policy of deceit.

On March 26, 1905, a leaflet appeared—"What Are the Facts?"—printed in the Avlabar plant. It exposed the foolishness of the liberals' claim that a political "spring" had arrived in Russia. It pointed out that the proletariat was rallying all who were discontented with the tsarist regime and was leading them in storming the fortress of tsarism. It reviewed the events of the preceding months and drew the conclusion that the real standard bearer and mainstay of the revolution was the proletariat. The leaflet called for the consolidation of the Party and for preparations for armed uprising. We must be ready the moment the Party gives the signal, it said, to launch the uprising and attack the arsenal, the banks, the post-office, the telegraph office and the railways, and to see to it that as far as possible all this is done simultaneously in all the chief centres, so as to give the government no opportunity to take measures to avert its doom.

An article entitled "Armed Insurrection and Our Tactics" in the second issue of "Proletariatis Brdzola," July 15, 1905, declared that the revolution was spreading far and wide, and that the time was not far off when the revolutionary storm would burst over Russia in a mighty deluge, and sweep away all that was decrepit and foul, the tsarist autocracy with it.

The "Proletariatis Brdzola" waged a controversy against the opportunist Mensheviks, who argued that the movement was a spontaneous one in justification of their refusal to lift a finger to help organize revolt. The paper condemned the Menshevik slogan of Martov—arm the people . . . with a sense of the burning need for self-arming!—and set forth the Bolshevik view on the question of armed uprising:

"The necessity for widespread agitation and propaganda, the necessity for political leadership of the proletariat is an understood thing! To go no further than a general indication of this kind is either an evasion of a direct answer to life's question, or a manifestation of complete inability to adapt one's tactics to the requirements of the growing revolutionary struggle. Of course, we must redouble our political agitation; the Social-Democratic Party must try to subordinate to its own influence not only the broad masses of the proletariat, but also those broad sections of the 'people' who are gradually joining the revolution; we must try to popularize the necessity of

insurrection among all classes of the population, but this is not the only thing we must do! If the proletariat is to use the approaching revolution for the purposes of its own class struggle, for the purpose of achieving the democratic system that would guarantee it the greatest success in the further struggle, for Socialism, it must become not only the chief nucleus of the opposition, but also the guide and leader of the insurrection. The technical leadership and the organization of an all-Russian insurrection is precisely the new task which events put before the proletariat, and if our Party wants to be the real political leader of the working class, it must not and cannot renounce this duty. . . .

"Only such an all-round preparation for insurrection can ensure to the Social-Democratic Party the leading role in the forthcoming struggle of the people against the autocracy. Only complete fighting preparedness will make it possible for the proletariat to transform individual clashes with the police and the troops into a nation-wide insurrection to replace the tsarist government by a provisional revolutionary government. The organized proletariat contrary to all 'khvostists,'\* will use all its forces to secure for itself both the technical and the political leadership of the insurrection, this essential condition for using the approaching revolution in the interests of its class struggle." (L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia.")

"Proletariatis Brdzola" followed Iskra in calling for real measures of the most energetic kind to arm the proletariat. It called for the formation of special combatant groups to collect arms for the people and train them in their use, and to be ready at a moment's notice to come out into the streets, head the masses and put up armed resistance to the attacks of the Black Hundreds \*\* and all the other reactionary elements led by the government.

"Proletariatis Brdzola" urged that a plan for the uprising should be drawn up in every district, that the most vulnerable spots in the armour of the adversary should be sought out, that the points from which to begin the attack should be decided in advance, that forces should be properly distributed throughout the district and a thorough study made of its topography. Only such thorough and comprehensive preparations could ensure victory.

Thus, in the first issue of "Proletariatis Brdzola" we

\* KHOVSTISTS. See note Economists, page 12 above.

\*\* BLACK HUNDREDS. Feudal landlords who stood for the most ruthless suppression of the working people, and believed in the unlimited power of the tsar. They organised mass floggings and shootings in the suppression of the peasant movement, Jewish pogroms, and the manhandling of workers' demonstrations.

find an article entitled "A Provisional Revolutionary Government and our Tactics" which, like all the other articles in this paper, fully coincide with Lenin's views on vital questions of proletarian tactics. At that time the Mensheviks were publishing their own paper in Transcaucasia, called the "Sotsial-Demokrat." The "Proletariatis Brdzola" conducted a continual controversy with the Menshevik "Sotsial-Demokrat" and exposed the opportunist and anti-revolutionary line of the Mensheviks.

Speaking of the Mensheviks' fear to take part in an eventual revolutionary government, the "Proletariatis Brdzola" declared:

"The Bakunists," Engels said, 'for years had been propagating the idea that all revolutionary action from above downward was pernicious, and that everything must be organized and carried out from below upward.' Is it not from the Anarchists that our new *Iskra*-ists and their disciples on the "Sotsial-Demokrat" have learnt their political wisdom?"

An article entitled "The Tsar's Edict and the Popular Revolution," which appeared in the eleventh issue of "Proletariatis Brdzola," August 15, 1905, exposed the true meaning of the tsar's edict announcing the convocation of a popular assembly, a Duma, based on a franchise law drawn up by Minister Bulygin. The article analysed the edict point by point, showing that the right to vote in the elections to this popular assembly did not extend to the proletariat and that the electoral rights of the peasants were not guaranteed either. It pronounced the edict a manoeuvre of the tsarist government, an attempt to rally all the dark forces of reaction, and called for a boycott of the Bulygin Duma. This boycott was actively and successfully carried out by the Bolsheviks.

This same issue contained an article entitled "Social-Democrats and a Provisional Revolutionary Government," which convincingly put forward the Bolshevik view that the Social-Democrats should take part in a provisional revolutionary government.

The next issue, the twelfth, dated October 15, 1905, contained an article entitled "Reaction Is Spreading," showing that the tsarist government was making every effort to crush the popular revolution. "Bullets for the proletariat, false promises for the peasantry, 'rights' for the big bourgeoisie—such are the weapons with which the reaction is arming."

This article was written before the countrywide strike of October, 1905. But Stalin and his colleagues in the Caucasian Federation of the R.S.D.L.P. had a clear grasp of what was going on and were able to guide the masses ac-



Stalin with two women collective farmers, of Tajikistan, at a Conference of Workers in Cotton Farming, January 1935.



cordingly. They pointed out that a new wave of revolution was about to sweep the country and that the September events in Moscow and St. Petersburg were its fore-runners. The article condemned the Mensheviks for deluding themselves into believing that there was any likelihood of a Constituent Assembly with full powers being called as long as tsarism existed, and it once again called for preparations for a general armed uprising, for it declared, a successful armed uprising was the only hope of salvation for the people.

Another article in the same issue—"The Bourgeoisie Are Setting a Trap"—exposed the Congress of Zemstvos and Cities held in the middle of September, 1905. It was at this congress that the so-called Party of National Freedom, or the Constitutional-Democratic Party (the Cadets) was formed. The "Proletariatis Brdzola" showed that the Cadets were neither Socialists nor democrats, for they detested both the Socialist movement and the idea of a democratic republic. In actual fact the Cadets were simply out to strengthen the tsarist throne. All they wanted was to curtail certain of the tsar's prerogatives, and that only on condition that these prerogatives were transferred to the bourgeoisie.

The article pointed out that the Caucasian Mensheviks were merely trailing after the Cadets, and that in their organ, the "Sotsial-Demokrat," they were setting a trap for the working people similar to the one contained in the Cadet programme.

Beria's book, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia," contains numerous quotations from Comrade Stalin's articles against the Mensheviks published in "Proletariatis Brdzola" and other periodicals.

When the Mensheviks began an attack on Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the "Sostial-Demokrat," Stalin, in the eleventh issue of "Proletariatis Brdzola," published his "Reply to a Social-Democrat," which Lenin praised highly, and on his advice the Proletary reprinted Stalin's article "The Third Congress Before the Court of the Caucasian Mensheviks."

After the Manifesto of October 17, 1905, which the Mensheviks hailed as a victory, Stalin attacked the Mensheviks at a meeting in Nadzaladevi, Tiflis. In 1929 the *Kommunist* (No. 294) printed the reminiscences of one who was present at this meeting:

"At this moment Comrade Koba (Stalin) mounted the platform and addressed the audience: 'You have one bad habit,' he said, 'of which I must plainly warn you. No matter who comes forward, and no matter what he says, you

invariably greet him with hearty applause. If he says, "Long live freedom!"—you applaud; if he says, "Long live the revolution!"—you applaud. And that is quite right. But when somebody comes along and says, "Down with arms!"—you applaud that too. What chance is there of a revolution succeeding without arms? And what sort of revolutionnary is he who cries: "Down with arms!"? The speaker who said that is probably a Tolstoyan, not a revolutionary. But, whoever he is, he is an enemy of the revolution, an enemy of liberty for the people.' There was a stir among the audience, 'Who is he?' people asked. 'How bitterly he talks!' 'The tongue of a Jacobin!' Koba went on: 'What do we really need in order to win? We need three things, understand that and bear it well in mind —the first is arms, the second is arms, and the third is arms and arms again.'

"There was a loud outburst of applause, and the speaker left the platform."

In this very important period of the history of the Russian revolution, as throughout the whole subsequent history of the Bolshevik Party, we find complete agreement in the thoughts and actions of Lenin and Stalin—those two brilliant masters of the art of revolution.

"In the fight against the Mensheviks of Transcaucasia Comrade Stalin supported, explained and propagated Lenin's theory of revolution, the Bolshevik strategic slogan of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the Socialist revolution, and pointed out the tactical tasks of the proletariat." (L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia").

In November, 1905, there met under Comrade Stalin's leadership the Fourth Bolshevik Conference of the Caucasian Federation of the R.S.D.L.P., at which the Baku, Imeretino-Mingrelian, Tiflis and Batum Committees and the Guria Group were represented. It was decided to make vigorous preparations for armed insurrection and to adopt a number of organizational measures towards this end.

The Tammerfors Bolshevik Conference was held not long before the outbreak of the uprising. It was my great fortune to be present at this Conference; which was attended by Lenin and Stalin, and to work with Stalin on the commission for drawing up the political resolution. It is to be regretted that not even a pamphlet has yet been written about this Conference. Many of the documents relating to it have actually been lost, and our historians

should make it their business to reconstruct a picture of this Conference.

It was here that Stalin first met Lenin, and he gives us an account of this meeting in which he draws an unforgettable portrait.

"I first met Lenin," Stalin says, "in December, 1905, at the Bolshevik Conference in Tammerfors (Finland). I was hoping to see the mountain eagle of our Party, the great man, great not only politically, but, if you will, physically, because in my imagination I pictured Lenin as a giant, stately and imposing. What, then, was my disappointment to see a most ordinary-looking man, below average height, in no way, literally in no way, distinguishable from ordinary mortals. . . .

"It is accepted as the usual thing for a 'great man' to come late to meetings so that the assembly may await his appearance with bated breath; and then, just before the great man enters, the warning goes up: 'Hush! . . . Silence! . . . He's coming'. This rite did not seem to me superfluous, because it creates an impression, inspires respect. What, then, was my disappointment to learn that Lenin had arrived at the Conference before the delegates, had settled himself somewhere in a corner and was unassumingly carrying on a conversation, a most ordinary conversation with the most ordinary delegates at the Conference. I will not conceal from you that at that time this seemed to me to be rather a violation of certain essential rules.

"Only later did I realize that this simplicity and modesty, this striving to remain unobserved, or, at least, not to make himself conspicuous and not to emphasize his high position—that this feature was one of Lenin's strongest points as the new leader of the new masses, of the simple and ordinary masses, of the very 'rank and file' of humanity." ("Stalin on Lenin.")

Stalin also describes another characteristic of Lenin's:

"The two speeches Lenin delivered at this Conference were remarkable: one was on the political situation and the other on the agrarian question. Unfortunately, they have not been preserved. They were inspired, and they roused the whole Conference to a pitch of stormy enthusiasm. The extraordinary power of conviction, the simplicity and clarity of argument, the brief and easily understandable sentences, the absence of affectation, of dizzying gestures and theatrical phrases aiming for effect—all this made Lenin's speech a favourable contrast to the speeches of the usual 'parliamentary' orator.

"But what captivated me at the time was not these features of Lenin's speeches. I was captivated by that ir-

resistible force of logic in them which, although somewhat terse, thoroughly overpowered his audience, gradually electrified it, and then, as the saying goes, captivated it completely. I remember that many of the delegates said: 'The logic of Lenin's speeches is like a mighty tentacle which seizes you on all sides as in a vice and from whose grip you are powerless to tear yourself away: you must either surrender or make up your mind to utter defeat.'

"I think that this characteristic of Lenin's speeches was the strongest feature of his art as an orator." (*Ibid.*)

These remarkable features of Lenin's character are shared by Stalin. They are manifested in his activities, in his constant work of training the members of the Party and of the Young Communist League to be political leaders of the Leninist type.

The defeat of the December uprising did not shake the determination of the Bolsheviks. At this trying and difficult moment Stalin set an example of revolutionary firmness and perseverance. His pamphlet "Two Conflicts," written in January, 1906, is a splendid piece of work. The two conflicts were January 9, 1905—Bloody Sunday—and the uprising of December, 1905. On January 9 the workers had "marched in peaceful procession" to the tsar's palace to plead for "bread and justice." They came in their simple faith, carrying icons and portraits of the tsar. But the tsar reduced their hopes to ashes. The proletariat of St. Petersburg took to arms. After Bloody Sunday, the workers said: "The tsar gave it to us; we'll now give it to him!"

But the January actions of the St. Petersburg proletariat had not received determined support from the proletariat and the peasantry of the whole country. The movement was not simultaneous and was not guided by a single aim. The Party was still in process of formation and was weakened by internal dissension.

December, 1905, however, presented an entirely different picture: eleven months of turbulent revolutionary events had not failed to have their effects on the embattled proletariat. It was no longer icons and portraits of the tsar that the workers carried, but red flags and portraits of Marx and Engels; and it was no longer religious hymns and "God Save the Tsar" they marched to, but the powerful strains of the *Marseillaise* and other revolutionary songs. They already had arms, although all too few. And whereas in January the movement had been led by Father Gapon, now it was led by the party of the proletariat. But the tragedy was that the Party was disunited and the proletariat split. Another mistake pointed out by Stalin was that in the Moscow uprising the workers pur-

sued defensive, instead of offensive tactics.

The conclusion Stalin drew was that the future success of the movement demanded unity in the ranks of the revolutionary proletariat. "In a word," he said, "what victory of the uprising demands is a united party, an armed uprising organized by the party, and a policy of attack." (L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia.)"

Replying to the whining of the Mensheviks that the proletariat had been vanquished, Stalin went on to say:

"No, comrades! The proletariat has not been vanquished, but has retreated for a time and now it is getting ready for a new and glorious assault. The Russian proletariat will not haul down its blood-dyed banner; it has been and will be the only worthy leader of the great Russian revolution." (*Ibid.*)

In 1906 Stalin was a delegate to the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the Party. In the splendid speech he made there he formulated our main differences with the Mensheviks: "Either the hegemony of the proletariat," he said, "or the hegemony of the democratic bourgeoisie—that is how the question stands in the Party, and that is where our differences lie."

The underlying differences did indeed centre round the role of the classes, the role of the proletariat, and, consequently, the role of the Party. The friendship which had arisen between Stalin and Lenin before they had met, a friendship based on community of ideas, was reinforced at this Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.

A pamphlet by Stalin which appeared at this time, entitled "The Present Situation and the Unity Congress of the Workers' Party," was entirely directed against the Mensheviks and defended the position of Lenin; while in a number of articles by Stalin which appeared in various issues of the newspaper "Elva" (signed I. Bessoshvili), Lenin's position at the Fourth Congress, and on the agrarian question in particular was stoutly supported.

As we know the unity achieved at the Fourth Party Congress was only a formal unity. Actually, both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks retained their own views and their own independent organizations. Indeed the opportunism of the Mensheviks became more and more pronounced, and the Bolsheviks were forced to work for a split with them, in order to isolate the Menshevik leaders and win over the Social-Democratic workers.

Shortly after the Fourth Party Congress, Stalin succeeded in securing the formation of a Bolshevik Regional Bureau in Transcaucasia. Through this Bolshevik centre

he developed a vigorous struggle for the convocation of a new Party Congress, the most important function of which was to be to achieve real unity in the Party under the banner of revolutionary Marxism.

At the Fifth (London) Congress, Stalin continued to expose the fraudulent intrigues of the Mensheviks, and after the Congress published a report of its proceedings entitled "The London Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party ("Notes of a Delegate")."<sup>\*</sup> This account gave a complete picture of the work of the Fifth Congress and of the struggle that took place at it.

In Stalin's opinion, the most important result of this Congress was that "it led, not to a split, but to the closer amalgamation of the Party, the closer union of the foremost workers of all Russia in one indivisible party. It was an all-Russian Unity Congress in the true sense of the word....

"The actual unification of the advanced workers of all Russia into a single all-Russian party under the banner of revolutionary Social-Democracy—that is the significance of the London Congress, that is its general character."

The London Congress took place at a moment when the tsarist government was preparing for the coup d'état of June 3, which was to disperse the Second State Duma. The Bolshevik organizations were being smashed by the authorities, the revolutionary wave was clearly subsiding, the reaction had taken the offensive, and the revolution had temporarily retreated. Lenin and Stalin at this period called for preparations for a new rise of the tide, they taught how to fight under the new conditions, how to fight so as to ensure victory for the Party with the coming of the new turn of the tide, which was inevitable. In spite of the offensive of the reaction, Stalin carried on intensive work, this time in the oil city—Baku.

This is what he himself tells us of this period in "Zarya Vostoka" of June 10, 1926:

"Two years of revolutionary activities among the oil workers had served to steel me as a practical fighter and as one of the practical leaders. My close contacts with advanced Baku workers, such as Vatsek and Saratovets, on the one hand, the acute and stormy conflicts between the workers and the oil owners, on the other, had taught me for the first time to know what leading large masses of workers meant. There, in Baku, I thus received my second revolutionary baptism of fire."

\* NOTES OF A DELEGATE. This article has been printed as a preface to the Minutes of the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., and those who are studying this period will find in it the fullest description of this Congress which ended in a victory for the Bolsheviks.

Working in Baku in this difficult period of reaction, Stalin displayed his ability as organizer and propagandist to a greater degree than ever. Indeed, his greatest service to the revolutionary cause at this time was that he won over the Baku workers to the cause of Bolshevism.

Thus we find that during the period of the first Russian revolution Stalin worked hand in hand with Lenin in building up our Bolshevik Party. During this period he made valuable contributions in the theoretical field, independently working out the theory of the national problem and of Socialism in new conditions. He also made independent contributions to the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. In this period, too, he led the revolutionary movement in Transcaucasia, displaying tremendous energy and expert knowledge in building the Bolshevik organization. Finally he organized a secret Marxist press for Transcaucasia, whose influence was immense.

It is interesting to note that, when Karl Kautsky published in Germany his pamphlet on the motive forces of the Russian Revolution, both Lenin and Stalin brought out translations, simultaneously but independently. Moreover, they both contributed prefaces, which reveal the complete identity of their ideas at this time. These two great masters of the art of revolution vigorously combated all opportunist ideas in the working-class movement, and fought for the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, the hegemony of Marxism in the revolutionary movement.

## CHAPTER IV

### ACTIVITIES IN THE PERIOD OF REACTION

It was comparatively easy to work when the tide of revolution was running high, when every breast was filled with elation, when vast masses poured into the streets and filled them with the passion of revolutionary struggle: but it was far more difficult to work in the Party organizations in the period when the tide of revolution was subsiding, in the period of reaction, under the regime of Minister Stolypin. Recalling this period in his article "On the Tenth Anniversary of the *Pravda*," published in that paper on May 5, 1922, Stalin wrote:

"The young members of the Party have not, of course, experienced and do not remember the charms of this regime. As for the old members, they no doubt will remember the punitive expeditions, of accursed memory, the robber raids on the workers' organizations, the wholesale flogging of peasants, and, as a screen to cover all this, the Black-Hundred and Cadet Duma. A fettered public opinion, general weariness and apathy, want and despair among the workers, down-trodden and cowed peasants, amidst the general orgy of the police-landlord-capitalist blood-hounds—such were the characteristic features of the Stolypin pacification. . . .

"The triumph of the knout and of ignorance was complete. 'An abomination of desolation'—that is how the political life of Russia was then characterized."

The tyrannical tsarist governors in revenge for the fright they had got in the period when the revolution was at its height, tried to terrorize the working people, and take vengeance on them for 1905. The streets of towns and villages ran with blood. Punitive expeditions wrecked the revolutionary centres. In 1907, in the Tiflis and Kutais Provinces alone—the most outstanding centres of the revolutionary movement in Transcaucasia in the period of the first revolution—3,074 persons were deported by administrative order. At this period Stalin was working in Baku, and in spite of all the difficulties of the situation he remained at liberty until March, 1908. All through this period he kept up a ceaseless activity.

In Baku, as everywhere else in Russia, the employers, too, tried to rob the workers of their revolutionary gains. In a "Letter from the Caucasus," published in the eleventh issue of the Bolshevik illegal organ, the "Sotsial-Demokrat" (of February 13, 1910) Stalin described the condition of the Baku proletariat in the period of reaction as follows:

" . . . Far from subsiding, the economic repressions are, on the contrary, growing more and more severe. 'Bonuses' and rent allowances are being taken away. Work in three shifts (of eight hours each) is being replaced by work in two shifts (of twelve hours each) and compulsory overtime is becoming a regular system. Medical aid and expenditures for schools are being cut to a minimum (while the oil magnates spend over 600,000 rubles annually on the police!). The public dining-rooms and people's halls have already been taken away. The oil-field and factory commissions and the trade unions are being completely ignored, dismissals of class-conscious comrades are continuing as before. Fines and thrashings are being resumed." (Quoted in L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia".)

But this was later, in 1909 and 1910; in 1907 and 1908 the working-class movement in Baku was still at such a height that the employers did not yet dare to hurl the full weight of their reprisals against the workers. The strength of the Bolshevik workers' organizations at that time was revealed in the fact that it was possible to continue publication of the "Bakinsky Proletary" ("The Baku Proletarian".)

The "Gudok" ("The Siren") continued to appear legally; Sergo Orjonikidze said of this newspaper that while in Russia reaction, the silence of the grave, reigned supreme, the revolutionary "Siren" continued to sound in Baku and was heard all over the country.

During this period Sergo Orjonikidze, Kliment Voroshilov, Alyosha Djaparidze, Stopani, Suren Spandaryan, Stepan Shaumyan, Vanya Fioletov, V. P. Nogin (Makar), Vatsek, Alliluyev, Gvantsaladze (Apostol), Radus-Zenkovich (Egor) and others worked at various times with Stalin in Baku. Voroshilov was secretary of the Oil Workers' Union in the Bibi-Eibat District and worked as a boiler-maker for the Oleum Co. That Voroshilov would command the Socialist Red Army in a land covering one-sixth of the globe or that the men who were organizing the Baku workers would be the organizers and builders of the first Socialist State, were thoughts far from the minds of the Baku oil magnates, the Mantashevs, Lianozovs, Rothschilds and Nobels.

For the purpose of directing all the work in Baku the

Bolsheviks had set up a Baku Committee, with an Executive Bureau headed by Stalin. Every district in Baku had its District Committee. In addition, the Gummet organization was established to carry on work among the Mohammedan workers. He worked in all the districts, but he worked particularly in those where a determined struggle had to be waged against the Mensheviks, who were also trying to establish a permanent centre in Baku. In particular, he carried on important work in the Bibi-Eibart District, where the Mensheviks had entrenched themselves and where even remnants of the Shendrikov organization still survived. The activities of the Baku Committee had also played a highly important part in the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat in the preceding years. In an article entitled "The Conference and the Workers," Stalin later gave the following description of the part played by the Baku organization in the working-class movement:

"The first general strike in Baku, in the spring of 1903, marked the beginning of the famous July strikes and demonstrations in the southern cities of Russia; the second general strike, in November and December of 1904, served as a signal for the glorious struggles of January and February throughout Russia; in 1905 the Baku proletariat, rapidly recovering from the Armenian-Tatar massacre, throws itself into the struggle, infecting 'the whole Caucasus' with its enthusiasm; from 1906 on, even after the retreat of the revolution, Baku does not 'quieten down,' and carries out its proletarian May Day celebrations every year better than any other place in Russia, evoking a feeling of noble envy in other towns." (Quoted in L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia".)

The legal and illegal Bolshevik literature of that period, particularly the leaflets and articles written by Stalin and printed in the secret printing plants in Transcaucasia, show how great was the influence of the Bolsheviks at that time. Mass debate meetings, in which Stalin, Voroshilov, Orjonikidze and others took part and opposed the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Anarchists, were organized on a fairly wide scale.

Immediately after the Fifth (London) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., and after the dissolution of the Second State Duma, the Mensheviks hastened to dissolve the combatant organizations of the Baku workers. The Bolsheviks protested against this and restored these organizations.

First of all, Stalin strove to create a leading political centre in Baku that would be elected by the Party mem-

bership, be connected with all district organizations and enjoy the confidence of the membership.

In a leaflet written in August, 1907, by Stalin and signed by the Organization Commission covering the Balakhan, Bibi-Eibat, Cherny Gorod, Bely Gorod and Morskoy Districts, as well as the Mohammedan Gummet Group of the Baku organizations of the R.S.D.L.P., he called upon the workers to reject the leadership of the Menshevik centre, which had no contact with the masses, pursued an opportunist policy and did not in any way reflect the opinion and temper of the Baku proletariat. The Baku proletariat felt a legitimate distrust of this centre, which not only failed to lead the proletarian struggle, but dragged at the tail of events and fought the majority of the districts. Many problems faced the Baku Party organization. The dissolution of the State Duma gave rise to a strike campaign, and a conference with the oil employers was mooted. A conference of the railwaymen was held, as well as a conference of four districts of Baku and a conference of representatives of different parties for the exchange of information. The question of the elections to the Third State Duma arose; leaflets had to be issued in the Azerbaijan and Armenian languages to combat the national strife instigated by the servitors of the tsarist government, on the one hand, and by the Dashnaks, Bundists\* and Mensheviks, on the other. The Menshevik leading centre ignored all these events.

The question of establishing a Bolshevik leading centre on the lines of the Moscow and St. Petersburg centres was put plainly before the workers. The decision of the Organization Commission of the above-mentioned districts to this effect was subsequently supported by the other districts, and such a Bolshevik centre was established. It played an extremely important part in developing the working-class movement in Baku. There was not a single event that this leading centre did not react to with the utmost revolutionary energy, and Stalin played an exceptionally important part in its activities.

In connection with the elections to the Third State Duma in August, 1907, a leaflet was issued on behalf of a number of district committees, which explained that, although genuine popular representation was impossible in the tsarist Duma, the workers must nevertheless go to the ballot box in order to expose the despicable machinations

\* THE BUND. The General Jewish Labour League of Lithuania, Poland and Russia. Founded 1897. Up to 1901 demanded civil equality for the Jews. Subsequently (1903) adopted National Cultural Autonomy. Pursued a vacillating policy in relation to the Bolsheviks. In 1920, after many groups had split off and joined the Bolsheviks, only a small extreme right section remained.

of the autocratic tsarist government, whose aim was to deceive the working class. The Bolsheviks took part in the elections for the purpose of calling upon the people to start a fresh struggle to overthrow the tsarist government and to establish a democratic republic. The leaflet called upon the workers to show their enemies that they remained loyal to the revolutionary slogans they had issued in the glorious days of October and December, 1905.

The "Gudok" of August 22, 1907, published an article by Stalin (unsigned) entitled "Among the Social-Democrats." This article was directed against the reactionary ideas of anarchism, which after the dissolution of the State Duma and the advent of the period of reaction found a favourable soil among the declassed elements, among professional thieves and robbers. The leaflet called upon the workers and peasants to join the workers' organizations and to fight for an improvement of their economic conditions and achieve the aims which the organized working class had set itself.

In September, 1907, in connection with the murder of Khanlar, a politically advanced worker employed by the Naphthalan Co., the Bibi-Eibat District Committee of the Baku organization issued a leaflet, written by Stalin, which explained the role of advanced workers like Khanlar. "The Khanlar case is our case," the leaflet stated. "The assassins who fired at him fired at us, the advanced workers. By firing at us, the servitors of capital want to disorganize the ranks of our advanced comrades in order later on to draw the noose tighter around the necks of the Baku proletariat." The leaflet called upon the workers to down tools and demand the dismissal of Khanlar's assassins—Djafar and Abuzarbek. A two weeks' strike was declared, the significance of which was explained in a leaflet in the following words: "We will show the whole world that Khanlar did not stand alone, that every advanced worker is backed by an army of many thousands who are staunchly prepared to protect their comrades and leaders."

The fifth issue of "Gudok," October 14, 1907, contained an obituary notice written by Stalin, in which Khanlar was excellently portrayed in a few brief words: "He combined the fire, the passion, of the proletarian soul with the sorrow and burden of the peasant."

In August, 1907, the Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. circulated a letter to the comrades ("for Party members only") on the question of whether it was necessary to organize self-defence squads. As has already been stated the Mensheviks had decided to dissolve their fighting staff and combatant squads and to set up a committee with

which the workers were to deposit their arms. The decision of the London Congress to dissolve the combatant squads was given as their reason for this move, but in making this decision the London Congress did not deny the workers the right to organize self-defence squads to combat the organized murder of advanced workers by the Black-Hundreds. (In addition to Khanlar, the Bolsheviks Tuchkin and Lyssenin, and several workers in the Railway District and other districts were murdered.) In a leaflet issued at that time the Bolshevik Baku Committee informed the workers that it had decided immediately to organize a self-defence staff which would protect our comrades from overt and covert Black-Hundreds. The Baku Committee called upon the workers to render this self-defence staff the necessary moral and material support.

The Mandate which Stalin drew up later for the workers' deputies in the Fourth State Duma is well-known, but less-known is the fact that he drew up the Mandate for the deputies in the Third State Duma. This Mandate was an elaboration of the decisions of the Fifth (London) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., at which the Bolsheviks were victorious. It was endorsed by a meeting of representatives of the workers' curia in the City of Baku on September 22, 1907. It stated that the Social-Democratic deputies should form a separate group in the State Duma, and that, being the representatives of a definite party, they must maintain the closest contact with the Party and submit to Party leadership and to the instructions of the Central Committee.

The main task of this group in the State Duma was to assist the class education of the proletariat and help the latter to perform its role of political leader of all the working people.

The group was to pursue a consistent proletarian class policy, different from that of all other parties, from the Cadets to the Socialist-Revolutionaries. The workers' deputies were going to the State Duma not for legislative purposes, but to utilize that body as a revolutionary tribune. Such were the main lines of the mandate to the deputies in the Third Duma.

In a leaflet issued in November, 1907, in connection with the opening of the Third State Duma, it was pointed out that the workers' group in the State Duma could function successfully only if the masses of the people were kept informed of what went on in the Duma, and if the Party organizations explained to the masses that all hopes of securing the satisfaction of their demands in a peaceful, bloodless and "parliamentary" way were vain.

In the beginning of 1908 the first meeting took place

of the Shop Stewards' Council of the workers and office employees in the oil industry to elect representatives to a conference with the employers. This conference revealed how much the influence of the Bolshevik Party among the Baku workers had grown. When the oil owners realized that their plans to direct the conference into the channels they desired were not meeting with success, they launched an attack on the workers and began to discharge shop stewards who were influential among the workers, to take reprisals against strikers, to foment national strife and to provoke the workers to isolated actions with a view to crushing them piecemeal.

The 22nd issue of the Bolshevik "Gudok," March 9, 1908, contained an article by Stalin entitled "The Oil Owners Change Their Tactics." This article explained the change in the oil owners' tactics at the conference and called upon the workers to rally around the Oil Workers' Union, to refrain from isolated strikes, to avoid dissipating their forces in detached actions and to insist on the immediate convocation of the Shop Stewards' Council.

In August, 1907, a conference of the R.S.D.L.P. organizations in the Baku oil districts was held to discuss a general strike. At this Conference the question arose whether the workers should attend a "conference" proposed by the oil owners through their agents-provocateurs with the secret purpose of creating confusion in the workers' ranks and preventing the strike. The conference decided in favour of a general strike and resolved to call upon all Party members to take an energetic part in the strike campaign.

The oil owners were at that time anxious to increase the output of oil, as prices were very high. This was a favourable moment for the workers to declare a strike. The Bolsheviks set up a Committee of Thirteen, the members of which were elected at a meeting of shop stewards. The employers and their agents tried to deceive the workers with promises of "bonuses," but the Bolsheviks waged a campaign against accepting these sops, against the "charity" of the capitalists, and demanded an increase in wages and an improvement in the workers' material conditions.

The Baku Committee had at first opposed attending the conference proposed by the capitalists. In an article entitled "Boycott the Conference," published in the "Gudok" on September 29, 1907, signed "Ko . . ." (Koba), Stalin had said that "the question of attending or boycotting the conference is for us not a question of principle, but of practical expediency. We cannot decide once and for all to boycott all and every conference . . . On the other hand,

we cannot decide once and for all in favour of attending conferences, as our Cadet-minded comrades seem to find it possible to do. We must approach the question of attending or boycotting from the point of view of actual facts, and of facts alone."

In January and February, 1908, a number of strikes occurred in Baku; many of these were very successful and enhanced the influence of the Bolsheviks. The results of these strikes were summarized in an article by Stalin in the 21st issue of the "Gudok," March 2, 1908, entitled "What the Recent Strikes Show," and signed "K. Kato." The article stated that the strikes showed that, if properly organized, if the Oil Workers' Union actively intervened, if pursued with persistence, and if the proper moment was chosen for them, even isolated strikes could achieve important results and prove useful to the movement.

Boycotting all backstairs conferences, or conferences in which the workers were not guaranteed a hearing for their demands, the Bolsheviks in the autumn of 1907 had put forward four conditions on which they would be prepared to attend a conference. The workers were to have:

- "(1) The right to discuss their demands;
  - "(2) The right to hold meetings of their future Shop Stewards' Council;
  - "(3) The right to avail themselves of the services of their unions;
  - "(4) The right to choose the date of the conference."
- (Quoted in Stalin's article "The Conference and the Workers," published in "Bakinsky Proletary," No. 5.)

The Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks and the Dashnaks opposed the Bolshevik proposals, and the Mensheviks advocated attending the conference even without any guarantees. Their slogan was "A conference at any price." Having no hope of obtaining a majority among the working class, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Dashnaks jointly issued the slogan "Boycott at any price." As against these slogans, the Bolsheviks issued the slogan: "A conference with guarantees, or no conference at all." A canvass taken among the workers resulted as follows: "Of 35,000 workers canvassed, only 8,000 voted for the tactics of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Dashnaks (unconditional boycott), 8,000 voted for the tactics of the Mensheviks (unconditional conference), while 19,000 voted for the tactics of the Bolsheviks (conference with guarantees)." (L. Beria, "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia.")

All this took place at the end of 1907, when reaction was widespread throughout the country, when Stolypinism was rampant. Yet the overwhelming majority of the

Baku workers followed the lead of the Bolsheviks, and at a meeting of shop stewards of the oil fields and refineries at which demands to be presented to the employers were drawn up, the Bolsheviks directed the proceedings of the workers' representative body. "In the period when reaction was rampant in Russia, a workers' parliament sat in Baku for about two weeks, with Comrade Tronov, a Bolshevik worker, presiding. In this parliament the Bolsheviks worked out the demands of the workers and carried on widespread propaganda for their own minimum programme." (*Ibid.*)

The "Bakinsky Proletary" of April 15, 1908, published an unsigned article entitled "The Present Reaction and Our Tasks." This article stated that Baku was overhung by the black clouds of political reaction. The working class had achieved a brilliant victory, but proved unable to retain it. The peasantry, who should have come to the proletariat's aid, had failed to do so. The Black-Hundred government had taken advantage of this to launch a determined offensive against the proletariat, and step by step it was depriving it of the gains it had achieved in October: virtual freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of combination.

Stalin regarded this as a transient period, and was of the opinion that a more decisive clash between old and new Russia, a revival of the revolution, was inevitable. He explained, however, that this revival would not take place unless serious efforts were made to bring it about, and proposed that, in addition to forming illegal organizations, the widest possible use should be made of diverse forms of legal activity, such as work in the trade unions, the co-operative societies and other legal and semi-legal proletarian organizations.

At the same time, the "Bakinsky Proletary" called for more intense agitation and organization among the rural proletariat and the semi-proletarian poor peasants.

In July, 1908, in a supplement to the fifth issue of the "Bakinsky Proletary," Stalin published his article signed "Koba" entitled "The Conference and the Workers." The campaign in connection with the conference proposed by the oil owners had been suspended. The activities of the Shop Stewards' Council, the organization which was to draw up the demands, and the work of rallying the workers around this committee, had also been suspended.

In this article he said: "Mr. Djunkovsky, that old Tiflis clown, announces that the 'show' is over. Mr. Kara-Murza, that dissipated lackey of capital, applauds him. The curtain drops, and we witness the old familiar scene, the oil owners and the workers are marking time in their

old positions in anticipation of fresh storms, of new clashes."

The article reviewed the history of the conference, and all the stages through which it had passed. It explained to the workers that the oil owners were sabotaging the conference because they had convinced themselves that the workers would not follow their lead, but that of the Bolsheviks.

The oil owners were provoking the proletariat to declare a general strike. What tactics should the workers use to counter this move? The situation was no longer favourable for a general strike; but this did not mean that the workers should refrain from calling separate strikes at various plants. At the same time, it was necessary to consolidate the influence of the bodies that had been elected to carry through the conference.

Meanwhile, agents-provocateurs were trying to incite anarchist riots among the backward workers and thus provide a pretext for crushing the workers, but a leading article in the "Gudok" (No. 25, 1908), entitled "Economic Terror and the Working-Class Movement," called for emphatic condemnation of this form of struggle and urged the workers to adopt the method of a mass proletarian movement.

In these difficult years in Baku Stalin invariably advocated the line of revolutionary Marxism, the Leninist line, and fought the opportunists of the Right and the "Left."

The importance of the Baku organization at that time, and the value which Lenin attached to the activities of the Baku workers can be seen in the following passage: "In 1908, at the head of the provinces having considerable number of strikers stands the Baku Province, with 47,000 strikers. The last of the Mohicans of the mass political strike" ("Strike Statistics in Russia," *Collected Works*, Vol. XV.)

Stalin's tremendous activities in Baku were brought to a halt by his arrest on March 25, 1908. He was taken to the Bailov prison, but even here he did not cease his revolutionary activities for a moment, did not lose contact with his comrades, and actually continued to contribute to the workers' press. While in prison, he compiled practically the whole of the second issue of the "Bakinsky Proletary." People who were in prison with Stalin at that time testify that he enjoyed considerable prestige among the political offenders. He arranged debates against the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks on the theory and practice of the revolutionary struggle.

The prison authorities were steadily abolishing the comparatively mild regime that had existed in the prisons

at the height of the revolution, and the system was becoming more and more stringent. The political offenders protested against this. Stalin was always one of those who continued the struggle against the tsarist government even in prison. The prison authorities decided to "teach a lesson" to the political offenders and sent a company of the Salyansk Regiment to pacify them. The political offenders were brought out into the courtyard and compelled to "run the gauntlet"; they were driven between two files of soldiers who belaboured them with the butts of their rifles. Stalin marched beneath the rain of blows with head erect, a volume of Marx in his hand, showing how a true Bolshevik, fearless of all persecution, and despite all obstacles, proudly and confidently carries forward the Marxian idea, convinced that its triumph is inevitable.

After eight months' imprisonment, at the very height of the Stolypin reaction, Stalin was sentenced to exile in Solvychegodsk. But on June 24, 1909, he left that "hospitable" town and returned to Baku under the name of Oganes Totomyants.

On returning to Baku, he again set to work to organize a secret printing plant. Although reaction was rampant, he worked on the Baku Committee and formed a propagandist group. As a member of this group he carried on extensive propaganda work. He had to visit Party organizations in other cities, and went to Tiflis to make preparations for a Bolshevik Party Conference. He opposed the Liquidators and the Otzovists. He directed the work of a number of Baku district organizations—in the Railway District, Cherny Gorod and Bely Gorod—and carried on work among the seamen. Here, too, he revealed his keen intuition, and his ability to sense new factors as they arose in the movement. In January, 1910, when only the first faint symptoms of the revival of the working-class movement were perceptible, he wrote in the first issue of the "Tiflissky Proletary" ("The Tiflis Proletarian") : "We are on the eve of new outbreaks. . . ."

This was the intuition of a great Bolshevik revolutionary, who lived the life of the masses and thoroughly understood the temper of the masses. It was the intuition of a revolutionary who closely watched the course of events and noted all the changes in the surrounding situation.

His "Letters from the Caucasus," published in the "Sotsial-Demokrat" of February 26, 1910, and the "Discussion Sheet" of June 24, 1910, drew a vivid picture of what was going on in the Caucasus. They gave an appraisal of the situation and served as an excellent weapon in the fight against the Liquidators, Mensheviks, Bundists and other opportunists. The liquidators were enraged when

articles by Stalin appeared exposing the Mensheviks in the eyes of the workers.

During this period Lenin and Stalin were in frequent correspondence with each other, which still further strengthened the political ties between them.

This time Stalin did not manage to remain at liberty for more than eight months. On March 23, 1910, he was again arrested in Baku. He was detained in prison until September 23, 1910, when he was again exiled (for the third time) and sent to Solvychegodsk, where he remained until July 6, 1911.

The small apartment in which he lived in Solvychegodsk served as a rendezvous for political exiles. The police reported to headquarters that at his house lectures were delivered, instructions given and revolutionary propaganda disseminated. From Solvychegodsk, too, Stalin wrote to Lenin, stating that he entirely agreed with his policy of a bloc with the Plekhanov Party-supporters, as this was a bloc based on principles. He spoke with contempt of Trotsky's unprincipled bloc. He expressed the opinion that the most important task of the moment was to establish a legally-sanctioned newspaper. And, indeed, shortly afterwards, the newspaper "Zvezda" ("The Star") began to appear. Stalin urged that the Bolshevik organization be strengthened and that something in the nature of a Russian Bureau of the Central Committee be set up. He advised the formation in Russia itself of a group of leading members of the Central Committee to direct all Party work within the country. And concerning himself he wrote: "I have another six months to go. When that term is over, I am entirely at your service. If the need for people is really pressing, I could cast off immediately." We know that Stalin could always be relied upon to "cast off" and escape from exile when the cause demanded it.

At the Conference of the Central Committee held in June, 1911, he was appointed a member of the Organization Committee for convening the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. Lenin attached the highest value to the articles opposing the Liquidators that Stalin wrote for the "Sotsial-Demokrat", the Bolshevik magazine published abroad.

At this time Stalin escaped from his place of exile and took an active part in the preparations for the Prague Conference. While in Vologda, he procured a passport belonging to an exile named Chizhikov, whose term of exile had expired, and with this passport went to live in St. Petersburg. But he was soon arrested, and, after three months of preliminary detention, was again exiled, this time to the Vologda Province.

Stalin attached enormous importance to the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P., which took place in Prague in January, 1912. "It is well known," he said, "that this Conference was of the utmost importance in the history of our Party, for it drew a boundary line between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks and amalgamated the Bolshevik organizations all over the country into a united Bolshevik Party." (Speech in Reply to the Debate at the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.[B.].)

Lenin rejoiced that the Mensheviks had at last been ejected from the Party. In a letter to Gorky he wrote: "At last we have succeeded, in spite of the Liquidator scum, in restoring the Party and its Central Committee. I hope you will rejoice with us over the fact." (Lenin: *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIX.)

As we know, at this Conference, although Stalin was not present, he was elected a member of the Central Committee, and placed at the head of its Russian Bureau. Having been elected to the Central Committee, he could not possibly remain in exile—that was not in his nature—and so he immediately "cast off" and, with Sergo Orjonikidze's assistance, escaped from Vologda. Lenin was very much disturbed at not having heard from Stalin for some time. He regarded him as a front-rank champion of the cause, and in a letter dated March 28, 1912, which was intercepted by the police, he enquired of friends with alarm "Have heard nothing from Ivanovich (Stalin.—E. Y.) Is he all right? Where is he? How is he?"

After his escape from exile he visited a number of districts to consolidate the results of the Conference, and returned to St. Petersburg at the very moment when the news of the Lena gold fields events burst upon the world. In conjunction with Poletayev and others, he had succeeded by this time in starting "*Pravda*" ("Truth"). In 1912 the St. Petersburg Bolshevik newspaper "*Zvezda*" published an article by him on the Lena events, in which, stressing their revolutionary significance, he said:

"The Lena shooting has broken the ice of silence and the river of the people's movement has begun to flow. The ice is broken! . . . All that was evil and pernicious in the present regime, all the ills of long-suffering Russia were focussed in the one fact, the Lena events. That is why it was the Lena shooting that served as a signal for the strikes and demonstrations."

On April 22, 1912, the day the first issue of "*Pravda*" appeared, Stalin was arrested. He had been betrayed by agents-provocateurs who had learnt where he lodged and the places he visited. And so, for the fifth time, the tsarist government sent him into exile. This time he was sentenc-

ed for three years to Narym, in Western Siberia, in the Far North. In this new place of exile he continued to engage in numerous activities. In order to fulfil his duties as member of the Central Committee, he made efforts to escape, but succeeded in doing so only in the autumn of 1912.

His activities during the period of reaction were of great importance. Working in Baku when reaction was raging, he showed that nothing can prevent a genuine Bolshevik from carrying on intense revolutionary activity in the ranks of the working class, no matter how reactionary the regime may be. In this period the ties between Lenin and Stalin became closer than ever.

Stalin now stood out as one of the leaders of the all-Russian Bolshevik movement. He had taken part in the work of preparing for the Prague Conference, which, as we know, was of tremendous importance in giving organizational shape to the Bolshevik Party. As a member of the Central Committee, he had founded "Pravda," the first Bolshevik newspaper with a mass circulation. The importance of this paper was enormous, and it was to play an exceptional role in the period of revolutionary revival that was then setting in.

## CHAPTER V

### REVOLUTIONARY REVIVAL AND IMPERIALIST WAR

We already know that, after escaping from exile in Vologda, Stalin arrived in St. Petersburg just when the news of the shooting down of the workers in the Lena gold-fields was giving a powerful impetus to the revolutionary movement. Notwithstanding the fact that reaction still seemed to be well entrenched, "the shooting down of workers in remote Siberia (Bodaibo) was sufficient to send a wave of strikes all over Russia and to cause the St. Petersburg proletariat to come out into the streets and at one stroke sweep out of the way the boastful Minister Makarov with his insolent challenge: 'So it was, and so it will be.' These were the first intimations of a powerful movement. The "Zvezda" was right when it exclaimed: 'We are alive, our red blood is seething with the fire of unexhausted strength. . . .' The revival of the revolutionary movement was evident.

"It was in the waves of this movement that the mass workers' newspaper "Pravda" was born." (J. Stalin, "On the Tenth Anniversary of 'Pravda.'")

Stalin took a very active part in organizing the publication of "Pravda," and in his reminiscences of this event in 1922, he wrote:

"It was one evening in the middle of April, 1912, in Comrade Poletayev's house, when two Duma deputies (Pokrovsky and Poletayev), two writers (Olminsky and Batyrin), and I, a member of the Central Committee (being illegal, I had taken 'asylum' in the house of the 'immune' Poletayev), came to an agreement concerning the platform of "Pravda" and compiled the first issue of the paper." (*Ibid.*)

We have seen that on the day the first issue of the "Pravda" appeared, April 22, 1912, Stalin was arrested and subsequently exiled to Narym. On September 1 of that year, however, he escaped from Narym and returned to St. Petersburg, where he vigorously took up his activities as a member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party and as editor of the Central Organ, "Pravda," which in that period was laying the foundations for the subsequent victory of Bolshevism in 1917.

In A. Badayev's book "The Bolsheviks in the Tsarist Duma," we find many interesting facts about Stalin's activities in St. Petersburg during this period. The election campaign for the Fourth State Duma was in progress. Stalin took a very active part in this campaign and directed the whole struggle of the St. Petersburg workers. At that time Lenin was living in Cracow, where the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party had its headquarters. From Cracow Lenin by devious ways and means sent instructions to the Party workers, and the St. Petersburg organization, the largest in the Party, carried out these instructions under Stalin's guidance.

Stalin not only wrote articles for "Pravda," but directed it, and when the Bolshevik magazine "Prosveshcheniye" ("Enlightenment") began to appear, he took an active part in it from the first issue. "Prosveshcheniye" Nos. 3 to 5. 1913, contained Stalin's article on "The National Question and Social-Democracy," which afterwards appeared separately under the title of "Marxism and the National Question." The magazine published a number of other articles of his; No. 1, 1913, for example, contained one entitled "A Point of Information (The Elections in the St. Petersburg Workers' Curia)," in which he explained why the Party was not boycotting the State Duma and showed how enormously important were the strikes called by the St. Petersburg workers in defence of the rights of their representatives in the Duma elections.

Naturally, in conditions of illegality, when hundreds of eyes were keeping close watch on the Bolsheviks, it was by no means easy for Stalin to carry on his work, and if the workers had not constantly guarded him, he could not have remained at liberty even for a few months.

In October a conference of electoral representatives for the State Duma elections was held. At this conference the "Mandate of the Workingmen of St. Petersburg to Their Labour Deputy" was approved. This Mandate had been drawn up by Stalin, and Lenin attached so much importance to it that he put a marginal note on his copy requesting that it be most carefully preserved. This document, with Lenin's note, can now be seen in the Central Lenin Museum in Moscow.

In this mandate Stalin laid down the principles upon which the workers' deputies in the State Duma were to base their activities. The Mandate described the condition of the working class and the peasantry, pointed out that the working class was the vanguard, the leader of the revolution and that the peasantry was the ally of the working class, that the impending struggle would be a "struggle on two fronts—against the feudal-bureaucratic system

and against the liberal bourgeoisie, which is seeking an alliance with the old regime. . . ." It explained that "the Duma tribune is, under the present conditions, one of the best means for enlightening and organizing the broad masses of the proletariat." The Mandate went on to say:

"We want to hear the voices of the members of the Social-Democratic Group ring out loudly from the Duma tribune, proclaiming the ultimate goal of the proletariat, proclaiming the full and uncurtailed demands of 1905, proclaiming the Russian working class as the leader of the popular movement, proclaiming the peasantry as the most reliable ally of the working class, and denouncing the bourgeois liberals as the betrayers of the 'people's freedom.'

"Let the Social-Democratic Group in the Fourth Duma, in its work on the basis of the above slogans, be united and closely welded.

"Let it derive its strength from constant contact with the broad masses.

"Let it march shoulder to shoulder with the political organization of the working class of Russia." (Quoted by A. Badayev in "The Bolsheviks in the Tsarist Duma.")

Referring to the historical importance of this Mandate, Badayev quite properly observes that a quarter of a century later it was echoed by another Mandate, the mandate drawn up by Stalin for the people's deputies in the elections to the first Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., on December 12, 1937.

Undoubtedly, the "Mandate of the Workingmen of St. Petersburg to Their Labour Deputy" was of enormous importance. In summing up the results of the elections and the importance of the Mandate in an article in "Pravda" of October 19, 1912, signed "K. St.", Stalin wrote: "The Mandate is the deputy's instructions. The Mandate makes the deputy. The quality of the deputy depends on the quality of the Mandate."

Stalin took a very active part in the discussion of the declaration to be read by the Social-Democratic members of the Duma at the opening of the Fourth Duma, and at the meeting at which this declaration was discussed, he spoke on behalf of the Central Committee of the Party.

On November 15, 1912, the day the Fourth Duma opened, the St. Petersburg Committee of the Bolsheviks organized a political demonstration as a counterblast to the greetings which the Liquidators addressed to the Duma on this occasion. Lenin wrote in this connection "The moment for the demonstration was extremely well chosen! A wonderful proletarian instinct was displayed by this ability to contrast and set off the opening of the black 'parliament' with scarlet banners in the streets of the capital!" ("The Events of November 15," *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI.)

Stalin here gave a striking example of how every legal opportunity, however small, could be utilized and of how legal activities could be combined with illegal activities.

Stalin at this time kept up a constant correspondence with Lenin, but Lenin wanted to see him in person and urged him to visit him abroad. Notwithstanding all the difficulties involved in such a journey, necessitating as it did breaking through the cordon of spies that were on the look-out for Bolsheviks, Stalin succeeded in making his way through to Lenin in Cracow in November, 1912. There they discussed and reached an agreement on all the important problems then facing the Party, and in December, 1912, Stalin returned to Russia. Lenin was very loth to part with him, and tried to persuade him to remain abroad, as he was in constant danger in Russia.

Urging that the six Bolshevik deputies in the Fourth State Duma should come to visit him in Cracow, Lenin wrote to Stalin, insisting that he accompany them without fail. In a letter to Vasilyev (Stalin) dated December 23, 1912, Lenin wrote: "Come... we are worried." Shortly afterwards, Stalin again visited Cracow and took part in a conference of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. with Party workers, at which he was elected a member of the Bureau of the Central Committee in Russia. In order to keep it secret, this conference was called the February Conference of 1913, although it actually took place at the end of December, 1912.

While abroad in January and February, 1913, Stalin worked assiduously on the national question, and in a letter to Gorky, Lenin referred enthusiastically to Stalin and his work: "A wonderful Georgian here," he said, "has sat down to write for "Prosveshcheniye" a long article for which he has collected "all" the Austrian and other materials."

The outcome of these studies was seen in Stalin's classic work, "Marxism and the National Question." The point of this remarkable book was directed against the Liquidators, Bundists and Caucasian Mensheviks, who shared the Menshevik theories of Otto Bauer and Springer. As we know, these opportunists advocated the bourgeois demand for national cultural autonomy as against the Bolshevik demand for the right of nations to self-determination. They even advocated dividing the workers according to nationality in the Party, the trade unions and the workers' insurance organizations. They were enemies of proletarian unity and strove to undermine the idea of proletarian internationalism.

How much importance Lenin attached to Stalin's work

may be seen from his article: "The National Programme of the R.S.D.L.P.," in which he wrote: "This state of affairs and the principles of the Social-Democratic national programme have already been dealt with recently in theoretical Marxian literature; in this connection Stalin's article stands in the forefront." (Lenin: *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII.)

The "History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)" quite rightly observes that at that time "only the Bolsheviks had a Marxist programme on the national question, as set forth in Stalin's article, 'Marxism and the National Question,' and in Lenin's articles, 'The Right of Nations to Self-Determination' (*Selected Works*, Vol. IV) and 'Critical Notes on the National Question.'"

After completing his work on the national question, Stalin returned to St. Petersburg. Not having heard anything from him for some time, Lenin, in a letter dated March 8, 1913, enquired: "Why is there no news of Vasily (Stalin—E. Y.)? What is wrong with him? We are worried." Two days later, he again writes: "Take good care of him" (Stalin), "he is very sick."

At that time the agent-provocateur Malinovsky had managed to get on to the Central Committee of the Party and into the Bolshevik group in the Duma. He betrayed Yakov Sverdlov to the tsarist secret police and, shortly afterwards, Stalin, who was then living in close hiding in St. Petersburg. In "The Bolsheviks in the Tsarist Duma," Badayev describes Stalin's arrest in the following words: "The police were waiting impatiently for the first opportunity to arrest him when he came out into the street. This opportunity soon arose. A concert had been arranged in the Kalashnikov Hall on behalf of "Pravda" and other revolutionary purposes. Such concerts were usually attended by large numbers of workers and by sympathizers among the intellectuals. They were also attended by Party members, including many working in secrecy, who took advantage of the noisy crowd to meet and talk to people whom it was inadvisable to meet openly. Stalin decided to attend the concert in the Kalashnikov Hall, and Malinovsky, who knew of this, informed the Department of Police. Stalin was arrested before our eyes that evening in one of the rooms of the Hall."

This was the last time he was arrested. For the sixth time the tsarist government sent him into exile, on this occasion to the Turukhansk Region, beyond the Arctic Circle, first to the small settlement of Kostino, and later, in the middle of 1913, to the village of Kureika.

Comrade Vera Schweizer, who had also been exiled to

the Turukhansk Region, describes Kureika, where Stalin lived, as follows:

"In the winter, unknown to the police, Suren Span-daryan and I made a journey to the village of Kureika to visit Stalin. We had to settle a number of questions connected with the trial of the Bolshevik group in the Duma that was then in progress, and a number of Party matters. During that part of the year day and night merge into one endless Arctic night pierced with cruel frosts. We sped down the Yenisei by dog-sled without a stop, across the bleak wilderness that lies between Monastyrskoye and Kureika, a dash of 200 kilometres, pursued by the continuous howling of wolves.

"We arrived in Kureika and looked for the hut where Comrade Stalin lived. Among the fifteen huts in the village this was the poorest: an outer room, a kitchen where the owner and his family lived, and Comrade Stalin's room —that was all.

"Comrade Stalin was overjoyed at our unexpected arrival and did all he could to make the 'Arctic travellers' comfortable. The first thing he did was to run to the Yenisei, where his fishing lines were set in holes through the ice. A few minutes later he returned with a huge sturgeon flung across his shoulder. Under the guidance of this 'experienced fisherman' we quickly dressed the fish, extracted the caviar and prepared some fish soup. And while these culinary activities were in progress, we kept up an earnest discussion of Party affairs. The very room seemed to breathe of the intense working of Stalin's mind, which at the same time was not diverted for a moment from surrounding realities. His table was piled with books and huge bundles of newspapers. And in a corner was stacked fishing and hunting tackle of various kinds, which he himself had made."

Stalin remained in this place of exile right up to the February Revolution of 1917.

In the period of revival of the revolutionary movement, Stalin headed the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee, directed the work of the St. Petersburg Party organization, the election campaign to the Fourth State Duma, and "Pravda;" at the same time he made extensive theoretical contributions to "Prosveshcheniye," and wrote "Marxism and the National Question," the ideas of which later played an extremely important role in the October Socialist Revolution and in the succeeding years of construction of the Socialist state. These ideas guided the Party, the Soviet Government and the Soviet peoples in liberating the working people of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia from servitude to the Polish lords.

During the period of the imperialist war, Lenin and Stalin were separated by thousands of miles; newspapers rarely reached Kureika in remote "Turukhanka," and the mail would sometimes bring the issues of two or three months in one batch. Only very few of Stalin's letters could reach Lenin by the intricate and devious routes they had to travel. One of these letters, which has been preserved, breathes confidence in the victory of the revolution and loyalty to the cause of the proletariat; it reveals how clearly Stalin understood the international situation and how clearly he pictured the Party's line of conduct in this period of the first world imperialist war. Although his contact with the main Party organization was so precarious as to make his isolation almost complete, nevertheless his knowledge of Marxism was so deep that he was able independently to reach the same conclusions on the true nature of the imperialist war and the next steps to be taken, as were reached by Lenin and the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party.

Only at the end of 1914 was Stalin able to acquaint himself with the first draft of Lenin's theses on the war.

"A particularly exciting moment in our life of exile was the arrival of Lenin's instructions," relates Vera Schweizer. "In Krasnoyarsk, on my way to exile in Turukhansk, I received the first draft of Lenin's theses on the war. They were brought to me from a secret address to which Nadezhda Konstantinovna (Krupskaya—E. Y.) used to send letters from Lenin. I handed over these theses to Comrade Stalin, who was then living with Suren Spandaryan in the village of Monastyrskoye. Lenin's seven theses on the war showed that Comrade Stalin had unerringly taken the correct Leninist position in his appraisal of the complex historical situation. It is difficult to convey the joy, conviction and triumph with which Comrade Stalin read Lenin's theses, which confirmed his ideas and served as a pledge of victory for the revolution in Russia."

There is preserved a letter sent by Stalin and Suren Spandaryan to Lenin, in which they scoff at the national-defencists Plekhanov, Kropotkin and the French Socialist Sembat, a Minister in the French government.

In the summer of 1915 Stalin managed to attend a large meeting of exiled Bolsheviks in the village of Monastyrskoye in Turukhansk. At this meeting all three members of the Russian group of the Bolshevik Central Committee then in exile were present, Stalin, Suren Spandaryan and Yakov Sverdlov. Stalin at this meeting denounced Kamenev's despicable conduct at the trial of the Bolshevik Duma group.

Thus even in this remote Siberian village, Stalin dis-

played profound attention to and keen interest in Party life. He read a great deal, kept himself informed of the Party's work in Russia, reacted as far as he was able to every event in Party life, and occupied his leisure with fishing and hunting, which furnished him with some means of livelihood.

In February, 1915, after an interruption caused by the arrest of the editorial staff, the Bolshevik magazine, "Voprossy Strakhovaniya" ("Insurance Questions"), resumed publication. This magazine played an important role at that period, for it was the only legally-sanctioned Bolshevik magazine. Its editorial offices served as a rendezvous for the Petrograd Bolsheviks, who were then working under Molotov's direction. The magazine was a screen for the Bolsheviks' secret activities, and in spite of the rigorous military censorship, which cut out a great many articles (the magazine appeared with blank spaces in place of articles), it managed to advocate the "uncurtailed slogans" of the Bolsheviks. When Stalin received the first issue of the revived magazines, he immediately started to collect money for it among the Bolshevik exiles in the Turukhansk Region. A letter to the editor accompanying a small contribution from the Turukhansk Bolsheviks (6 rubles 85 kopeks) reveals Stalin's love for the Bolshevik Party and its workers' press, and how he formulated the ideological tasks of this press.

Here is the letter:

"Dear comrades, we, a group of exiles in the Turukhansk Region, gladly welcome the resumption of publication of "Voprossy Strakhovaniya." At the present time, when the public opinion of the masses of the workers in Russia is so deliberately misrepresented and when genuine workers' representation is thwarted with the active assistance of A. Guchkov and P. Ryabushinsky, it is a joy to see and to read a real workers' magazine. "Voprossy Strakhovaniya" must exert every effort ideologically to insure the working class of our country against the corrupting preachings of Potresov, Levitsky, Plekhanov and their kind, which are anti-proletarian and fundamentally opposed to the principles of internationalism."

This letter was signed by Stalin, A. Maslennikov (who was subsequently shot by Kolchak), S. Spandaryan, Vera Schweizer and others.

Stalin was of the opinion that the main task of this magazine was to insure the working class of Russia against deception by the corrupting, anti-proletarian and anti-international preachings of the Menshevik Liquidators.

In December, 1916, all those serving sentences of administrative exile were conscripted by the tsarist govern-

ment for military service, and Stalin was sent to Krasnoyarsk. However, the tsarist government, knowing how dangerous he would be, did not take him into the army, but on the eve of the revolution sent him to Achinsk to complete his term of exile. The revolution broke out while he was still there.

Both in this period of the new revolutionary revival and in the war period in general, Stalin, undaunted by hardships, undeterred by difficulties, surmounting all obstacles, continued, with Lenin, to build the Bolshevik Party to consolidate its ranks, and to work out important problems in the theory and practice of revolution. He set an example of uncompromising hostility towards all opportunists, double-dealers, Trotskyites, Mensheviks, Liquidators of the Right and the "Left," and towards double-dealer Kamenev.

Although separated from Lenin by enormous distances, Stalin was at one with him, and was always confident of the inevitable triumph of the proletariat. In this, as in the previous periods, Lenin and Stalin were the personification of the united will of the vanguard of the Russian proletariat; they were the personification of the revolutionary thought, revolutionary ardour, and the struggle of the Bolshevik Party.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PREPARATION FOR AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

The year 1917 was an unforgettable year in the history of the Russian and the international working-class movement. It saw two revolutions—the February bourgeois-democratic revolution, which overthrew tsarism, and the Great October Socialist Revolution, which overthrew the power of the capitalists and landlords and established the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The movement which started in January, 1917, with protest strikes in commemoration of the men and women shot down by the tsarist government on January 9, 1905, steadily grew, and, at the end of February, burst into turbulent demonstrations in which not only workers but soldiers and sailors took part. On February 27, the Petrograd troops refused to fire on the workers and began to go over to the side of the people. The doom of tsarism was sealed. The great historical task of overthrowing tsarism, which Marx and Engels had written about more than once, and which Lenin had written about as far back as the 'nineties, was accomplished by the workers and peasants under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party. More than one generation of revolutionaries had perished in the struggle against tsarism, that repulsive monstrosity which the people at length overthrew in February, 1917.

The prison gates were thrown open, the political exiles were liberated; the Bolshevik Party emerged from underground and for the first time found itself in an atmosphere of freedom such as Russia had never before experienced. The bourgeois-democratic revolution was achieved. Nevertheless, all the important problems confronting the workers and peasants called for the further development of the revolutionary movement. At this time Lenin was in exile in Switzerland, and the bourgeois Provisional Government of Russia, together with their allies, the British and French imperialists, did their utmost to prevent Lenin from returning home.

On March 12, 1917, Stalin arrived in Petrograd from Siberia, an event of immense importance. He immediately

plunged into revolutionary activity, and his guiding hand was felt in the activities of the Petrograd Committee and of the entire Party. Answers had to be found to problems of the highest moment, and Stalin found them.

First of all, an answer had to be found to the question of power, the cardinal question of every revolution. The corrupt Romanov gang had been overthrown. What should be the nature of the new power? *Which class must take power?* This question was all the more difficult to answer for the fact that, owing to the treachery of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who had surrendered the power to the bourgeoisie, a dual power had arisen; side by side with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, a bourgeois Provisional Government had been formed.

What should be the role of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in view of the existence of this dual power, in view of the existence of the Provisional Government? "Pravda" of March 14, 1917, published an article by Stalin entitled "The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies," in which he formulated the immediate tasks as follows: "To hold on to the rights that have been won, so as to finish off the old forces and, in conjunction with the provinces, to advance the Russian revolution still further...."

Wherein lay the strength of this revolution? To this question Stalin replied "The strength of the Russian revolution lies in the alliance between the workers and the peasants clad in soldiers' uniform." The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies were the organs of this alliance. They had to be consolidated; the task was "to make them universal, and link them together under the aegis of the Central Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies as the organ of the revolutionary power of the people—this is the direction in which the revolutionary Social-Democrats must work." (Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

Stalin did everything to help the people extricate itself from the clutches of the imperialist war.

"Pravda" of March 18, 1917, contained an article by Stalin entitled "The Conditions of Victory of the Russian Revolution," in which, analysing the precedent events and the existing situation, he arrived at the conclusion that the dual power had to be abolished and a genuine organ of revolutionary power created that would "mobilize all the living forces of the people against the counter-revolution." He went on to say that "the only body that can serve as this organ is a National Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. Such is the first condition of the victory of the Russian revolution," thereby at this date already

preparing the way for the slogan "All power to the Soviets!"

At this time the masses were faced with the urgent question of their attitude to the war, and in an article in "Pravda" of March 16, 1917, entitled "The War," Stalin explained that it was necessary "to tear the mask from the imperialists and to reveal to the masses what is really behind the present war—but this means declaring real war on war, it means making the present war impossible."

The question now arose of finding a correct solution to the national problem, which was keenly agitating the numerous nationalists in Russia. Stalin gave the Bolshevik answer in an article entitled "The Abolition of National Disabilities," published in "Pravda" of March 25, 1917, in which he said that "it is necessary immediately to establish the rights of the nationalities now freed from oppression and to give these rights the force of law," and he went on to elaborate the Bolshevik demands on the national question, namely, the right of nations to self-determination, up to and including state secession.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were helping the landlords and capitalists to preserve the old agrarian relations. They called upon the peasants to defer the solution of the agrarian problem until the Constituent Assembly was convened, but they kept on postponing the convocation of the Constituent Assembly indefinitely. In a leading article in "Pravda" of April 14, 1917, entitled "The Land to the Peasants," Stalin exposed this deception perpetrated on the peasants by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Cadets. "What do they care about the peasants as long as the landlords flourish!" he wrote, and he went on to say "That is why we call upon the peasants, upon all the peasant poor of all Russia, to take their cause into their own hands and push it forward.

"We call upon them to organize in revolutionary peasant committees (district, rural area, etc.), to seize the landed estates through these committees, and to set about cultivating them in an organized manner, without waiting for orders.

"We call upon them to do this without delay, not waiting for the Constituent Assembly and paying no attention to reactionary Ministerial vetos, which are so many spokes in the wheel of the revolution."

Thus, Stalin found Bolshevik solutions for the most important problems of the revolution even before Lenin's arrival in Russia.

One of the most important conditions for the victory of the proletarian Socialist revolution was the preserva-

tion of the consistent principles of Bolshevik policy; it was necessary to combat those who favoured coalition with the bourgeoisie, and who would postpone the Socialist revolution indefinitely.

The opportunists found in Stalin a powerful and uncompromising opponent. He struck hard not only at the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Cadets, but also at the defeatists and blacklegs, Kamenev and his adherents, who, while claiming to be Bolsheviks, pursued a treacherous policy towards the revolution. Stalin kept the flag of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party flying. At the same time he urged Lenin by telegraph to hasten his return to Russia.

On April 3, Stalin went to Byelo-ostrov to meet Lenin. It was with great joy that the two leaders of the revolution, the two leaders of Bolshevism, met after their long separation. They were both about to launch into the struggle for the dictatorship of the working class, to lead the struggle of the revolutionary people of Russia. During the journey to Petrograd Stalin informed Lenin of the state of affairs in the Party and of the progress of the revolution. On April 4, Lenin addressed a conference and read his celebrated April Theses, in which he outlined the plan for the capture of power by the Soviets. When Zinoviev and Kamenev, those traitors to the revolution, opposed this plan, they met with a severe rebuff at the hands of Stalin, who ardently defended Lenin's plan for the growth of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the Socialist revolution.

A new period in Stalin's life began, a period of joint activity with Lenin. He attaches exceptional importance to the revolutionary experience he acquired in 1917. Speaking at a meeting of workers of the Central Repair Shops of the Transcaucasian Railway in Tiflis on June 8, 1926, Stalin recalled that period in warm terms. "Finally," he said, "I recall 1917, when, by the will of the Party, after my wanderings from prison to prison and from place of exile to place of exile, I was sent to Leningrad. There, amidst the Russian workers, in close proximity to the great teacher of the proletarians of all countries, Comrade Lenin, in the storm of great clashes between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, in the midst of the imperialist war, I learnt for the first time what it meant to be a leader of the great party of the working class. There, amidst the Russian workers—the liberators of the oppressed peoples and the vanguard of the proletarian struggle in all countries and of all nations—I received my third revolutionary baptism of fire. There, in Russia, under Lenin's guidance, I became a master in the art of revolution."

Together with Lenin, Stalin took part in the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet. Together with Lenin, he directed the meeting of Bolshevik delegates to the All-Russian Conference of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Together with Lenin, he, as a member of the Central Committee, directed the Central Organ of the Party, "Pravda." Lenin's articles in "Pravda" alternated with those of Stalin, and, in harmony, they drew a clear light on all questions touching on the struggle.

At the April Conference of the Bolsheviks (1917) Stalin reported on the national question, and in opposition to Pyatakov and other opponents, he urged the Leninist demand for the right of nations to self-determination.

Stalin emphatically rejected Kamenev's proposal that the policy of complete lack of confidence in the Provisional Government be abandoned for the demand for control over the activities of this government by the Soviets, and he showed that such control would imply a definite *agreement* between the controllers and the controlled.

In his report on the national question at this Conference, Stalin subjected the "Lefts"—Pyatakov and others—to withering criticism and showed that they were in fact playing into the hands of the chauvinists. "Thus," he said, "our views on the national question can be reduced to the following propositions: (a) recognition of the right of nations to secession; (b) regional autonomy for nations remaining within the given state; (c) special legislation guaranteeing freedom of development for national minorities; (d) a single, indivisible proletarian body, a single party for the proletarians of all nationalities of the given state." (Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

In May, 1917, after the April Conference, Stalin was elected a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, and he has remained a member of that body ever since.

As we know, the decisions of the April Conference were of enormous importance for the subsequent progress of the revolution, and for the Party's subsequent struggle for victory of the proletarian Socialist revolution. These decisions indicated the lines for the growth of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a Socialist revolution, the path of transition to the second stage of the revolution, the overthrow of the power of the capitalists and landlords and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. In a short space of time Lenin and Stalin did an enormous amount of work to prepare the masses for their great task. Day after day Stalin engaged in extensive organizational and propagandist activity, and precisely because of the immensity of the task that confronted the masses, it would have been

a mistake to dissipate their forces in isolated actions. The masses had to be organized in such a way that their actions would demonstrate the ever increasing strength of Bolshevism. The demonstrations in April, on May Day, and particularly that held on June 18, 1917, gave clear proof of this.

In connection with the June demonstration, Stalin drew up a manifesto addressed "To All Toilers, to All the Workers and Soldiers of Petrograd," calling upon them to convert that day "into a day of formidable protest by revolutionary Petrograd against reviving oppression and tyranny!" The manifesto went on to say:

"Let the victorious banners wave to-morrow, to the dismay of the enemies of freedom and Socialism!

"Let your call, the call of the fighters of the revolution, resound through the world, to the joy of all the oppressed and enslaved! . . .

"Workers! Soldiers! Clasp hands in a fraternal grasp, and—forward under the banner of Socialism!

"All into the streets, comrades!

"Rally in a close ring around your banners!

"March in serried ranks through the streets of the capital!"

In the demonstration of June 18, half a million Petrograd workers and soldiers marched under the banner of the Bolshevik Party, under the banner of Lenin and Stalin.

Seeing the speed with which the Bolshevik influence was growing, the Provisional Government decided to terrorize the Bolshevik Party, to drive it underground; and it sought for a pretext to launch political reprisals against the Party.

The treacherous, counter-revolutionary policy of the Provisional Government provoked the workers' and soldiers' demonstrations of July 3 and 4, 1917. After shooting down workers and soldiers in the streets, wrecking the offices of "Pravda" and hurling despicable accusations at Lenin, the Provisional Government issued an order for Lenin's arrest. He was compelled to go into hiding. The enemies of Bolshevism within the Party insisted that Lenin should stand for trial before the court of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. Stalin, Sergo Orjonikidze, Sverdlov and other Bolsheviks who were loyal to Lenin concealed him from the police of the bourgeois Kerensky government, from the infuriated junkers and other Whiteguards.

At this stern and difficult moment Stalin firmly led the Party in mustering forces for armed insurrection.

On July 10, 1917, the first issue of the "Rabochy i Sol-dat" ("Workers and Soldiers"), issued in place of

"*Pravda*," which had been suppressed by the government, published an article by Stalin entitled "The Victory of the Counter-Revolution," in which he wrote:

"The workers will never forget that in the stern moments of the July days, when the enraged counter-revolution opened fire on the revolution, the Bolshevik Party was the only party that did not desert the working-class districts.

"The workers will never forget that in those stern moments the 'ruling' parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, were in the camp of those who attacked and disarmed the workers, soldiers and sailors.

"The workers will remember all this and will draw the proper conclusions." (Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

On July 26, 1917, when the counter-revolution was celebrating its "victory," the Sixth Congress of the Party assembled. As we know, this Congress, which was directed by Stalin, for Lenin was then in hiding, shaped the course of the Party towards armed insurrection. The main reports were made by Stalin. He showed that the chief task now was to explain to the masses the need for the armed overthrow of the bourgeois power and the establishment of the power of the proletariat and the poor peasantry.

"Only one thing remained," Stalin said, "namely, to take power by force, by overthrowing the Provisional Government. And only the proletariat in alliance with the poor peasants could take power by force." ("History of the C.P.S.U.[B.]")

He showed further that the bourgeois-democratic revolution was already growing into the Socialist revolution, and that the changes that had taken place in the whole economic life of the country—both in agriculture and in industry—determined the Socialist character of our revolution. "It has begun to assume the character of a Socialist, workers' revolution," he said. ("Political Report of the Central Committee at the Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.," Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

He gave a severe rebuff to the enemies of the proletarian revolution—Bukharin and Preobrazhensky. These opportunists asserted at the Congress that Russia could not be the *first* country to achieve a successful Socialist revolution. To this assertion Stalin replied "We must abandon the antiquated idea that only Europe can show us the way. There is dogmatic Marxism and creative Marxism. I stand by the latter." ("Reply to Preobrazhensky on Point 9 of the resolution on the Political Situation," Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

He also pointed out that the dual power had already come to an end, that the power had actually passed into

the hands of the bourgeoisie. A new period had set in. He said: "The peaceful period of the revolution has ended, a non-peaceful period has begun, a period of clashes and explosions. . . ." ("Report on the Political Situation," Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

The "History of the Civil War" says the following of the Sixth Congress: "Lenin's spirit, his ideas, his firm leadership and his direct and clear-cut recommendations inspired the work of the Congress and the speeches and utterances of Stalin. Stalin carried on Lenin's cause, rallying the Party for the urgent and decisive task—the overthrow of the bourgeois government and the seizure of power by the proletariat and the poor peasants."

During this period, Stalin maintained contact with Lenin directly, as well as through Sergo Orjonikidze; he kept up a constant correspondence with him and firmly carried out Lenin's plan of preparation for armed insurrection.

Concerning Stalin's visit to Lenin in his place of hiding, Comrade S. Alliluyev says in his reminiscences:

"In the July days, when Lenin was obliged to hide from the persecution of the infuriated bourgeoisie, he lived with me for several days, from July 6 to July 11, and Comrade Stalin used to come to my house to visit Comrade Lenin. When Comrade Lenin left Sestroretsk (this was on the night of July 11), Comrade Stalin and I accompanied him to the Sestroretsk Station, which was then situated in Novaya Derevnya, on the Bolshaya Nevka embankment. We walked all the way from Tenth Rozhdestvenskaya Street to the station.

"While he was staying in the shack at Razliv, and later in Finland, Lenin sent me letters from time to time to be delivered to Comrade Stalin. The letters were brought to my house, and as they had to be answered promptly, Comrade Stalin moved into my house, 17 Rozhdestvenskaya Street, in August, and occupied the room in which Comrade Lenin had hidden during the July days."

Thanks to the correct policy pursued by the Party under the leadership of such great masters in the art of revolution as Lenin and Stalin, the proletariat and the revolutionary soldiers and sailors, rallying round the Party of the Bolsheviks, won over ever larger and larger numbers of the peasantry.

General Kornilov's mutiny in August, 1917, was crushed. A considerable share of the work of organizing the masses for the purpose of crushing this counter-revolutionary general and his accomplices fell to the lot of Stalin as a leader of the Bolshevik Party.

Writing in the "Rabochy i Soldat" of August 8, 1917,

Stalin exposed the counter-revolutionary designs of the government. When this counter-revolutionary Council was convened in Moscow in August, he wrote an article entitled "Against the Moscow Council," in which he set the following tasks before the advanced workers:

"(1) to tear from the Council the mask of a representative organ of the people, to drag its counter-revolutionary, anti-people's nature into the light;

"(2) to expose the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who are shielding this Council with the flag of 'saving the revolution' and are misleading the people of Russia;

"(3) to organize mass protest meetings against these counter-revolutionary machinations of the 'saviours' . . . of the profits of the landlords and capitalists.

"Let the enemies of the revolution know," warned Stalin, "that the workers will not allow themselves to be deceived, that they will not allow the battle-flag of the revolution to slip from their hands."

In the first issue of "Proletary," which began to appear in August, 1917, after "Rabochy i Soldat" had been suppressed by the Kerensky government, Stalin in an article entitled "Whither the Moscow Council?" welcomed the strike organized by the Moscow workers in protest against the Moscow Council of the enemies of the revolution. He exposed this counter-revolutionary conspiracy step by step. Summing up the proceedings of the Moscow Council in an article in the "Proletary" of August 17, 1917, he stated that it had resulted in the "coronation of counter-revolution."

As we know, the Kornilov mutiny had another result. It made the masses realize that only the Bolshevik Party could lead them to victory, that only the power of the Soviets could guarantee the consolidation of the gains of the revolution. The new elections to the Soviets resulted in a victory for the Bolsheviks. The slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" which had been temporarily withdrawn, was put forward.

Lenin was now more and more insisting on the necessity of preparing for insurrection, of passing on to revolution. In his letters, "The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power" (Lenin: *Selected Works*, Vol. VI) and "Marxism and Insurrection" (*Ibid.*), he severely condemned the capitulators, Kamenev, Zinoviev and the other opponents of insurrection. At a meeting of the Central Committee on September 15, the traitor Kamenev went so far as to propose that a statement be inserted in the resolution to the effect that the Bolsheviks were opposed to all street actions, whatsoever, and further that Lenin's letters be burnt, only

one copy of each being preserved in the files. Stalin passed severe stricture on Kamenev and thwarted his plans. He proposed that Lenin's letters be discussed immediately and that copies of them be sent to the most important Party organizations for their guidance. The Central Committee adopted these proposals.

Stalin at this period devoted great attention to the preparations for armed uprising, to the formation of a Red Guard, and the arming of the workers.

On October 10, 1917, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party appointed Stalin to be the member of the Political Bureau in charge of the insurrection. At the meetings of the Central Committee of October 10 and 16, at which the question of launching the armed uprising and taking power was decided, Stalin, jointly with Lenin, exposed and denounced Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky and the other traitors, defeatists and blacklegs of the revolution, showing that their proposals were tantamount to deliberately putting off the revolution and giving the counter-revolution the opportunity to organize.

At the meeting of October 16, Stalin said "Objectively, what Kamenev and Zinoviev propose would enable the counter-revolution to organize." He pointed out that two lines were contending against each other: one line was heading for revolution; the other line "does not believe in the revolution and counts on being only an opposition." (Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

The enlarged meeting of the Bolshevik Central Committee of October 16 placed Stalin at the head of the Party Centre for the direction of the uprising. It was this centre that directed the fighting during the October days. The Central Committee frustrated the reactionary plans of the Provisional Government to draw counter-revolutionary forces to Petrograd in order to crush the uprising. Kerensky ordered the suppression of the Bolshevik newspaper "Rabochy Put" ("Worker's Path"), but in vain, "it no longer depended on him." Stalin mustered a defence squad of Red Guards and Soldiers, which ensured the publication of the paper.

At 11 a.m. on October 24 (November 6), "Rabochy Put" appeared with a call to *overthrow* the Provisional Government. Simultaneously, on the orders of the Party Centre for the direction of the uprising, detachments of revolutionary soldiers and Red Guards were hurriedly concentrated at the Smolny.

The uprising had begun.

That same day Lenin wrote in his "Letter to the Members of the Central Committee":

"We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, first disarming the junkers (defeating them if they resist), and so forth.

"We must not wait! We may lose everything! . . .

"The matter must be decided without fail this very evening, or this very night.

"History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be victorious today (will certainly be victorious to-day), while they risk losing much, in fact, everything, to-morrow. . . .

"The government is wavering. It must be *destroyed* at all costs.

"To delay action will be fatal." (Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

That same day, too, Stalin wrote an article in the "Rabochy Put" entitled "What Do We Need?" in which he said:

"The time has come when further delay will be fatal for the whole cause of the revolution.

"The present government of landlords and capitalists must be replaced by a new government of workers and peasants." (Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)

That night Lenin arrived at the Smolny and jointly with Stalin directed the armed forces of the revolution.

In the morning of October 25 (November 7) power passed into the hands of the workers and poor peasants.

On October 27 (November 9) the first workers' and peasants' government was organized, headed by Lenin and Stalin.

The decision of the Congress of Soviets to form a Council of People's Commissars was signed: "Chairman of the Council: Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin); Chairman for the Affairs of the Nationalities: J. V. Djugashvili (Stalin)."

The Great October Proletarian Socialist Revolution was victorious. A new era in the history of mankind was ushered in, the era of Socialism. The reign of the Second International, of Social-Democracy, in the working-class movement came to a close; the reign of Leninism and the Third International began.

The great historical moment had arrived; the goal towards which the great leaders of the working class had striven was achieved; the dream of the finest minds of humanity was realized, the banner of Communism was unfurled over one-sixth of the earth.

At the time of the Revolution of October, 1917, the membership of the Bolshevik Party was less than a quar-

ter of a million, but it was backed by the millions, who poured into the cause of the Socialist revolution the revolutionary ardour that had been accumulating for centuries. They confidently marched to victory and achieved it, for the glorious banner of the proletarian Socialist revolution was held aloft by those two great battle-tried standard bearers, those two great masters of the art of revolution—Lenin and Stalin.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE EARLY PERIOD OF SOVIET GOVERNMENT

We have seen how important, immense and varied were Stalin's activities in the period of the first revolution, in the period of reaction and of the revival of the revolutionary movement after the first revolution, and in the period of conquest of power by the proletariat, but even more important have his activities been in the period of the proletarian dictatorship, when it was necessary to protect and uphold the power that had been won, to build up a Socialist economic system and a Socialist society in the midst of a capitalist encirclement.

Defining the world-wide significance of the October Revolution in his article, "The October Revolution and the National Question" ("Pravda," November 6 and 19, 1918). Stalin wrote:

"The great international significance of the October Revolution chiefly consists in the fact that:

"(1) It has widened the scope of the national question and converted it from the particular question of combating national oppression into the general question of emancipating the oppressed nations, colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism;

"(2) It has opened up vast possibilities and revealed the true way of achieving emancipation, and thereby greatly helped the cause of emancipation of the oppressed nations of the West and the East, having drawn them into the common channel of the victorious struggle against imperialism;

"(3) It has thereby erected a bridge between the Socialist West and the enslaved East, having created a new line of revolutions *against* world imperialism, extending from the proletarians of the West, through the Russian revolution, to the oppressed nations of the East.

"This in fact explains the indescribable enthusiasm which is now being displayed for the Russian proletariat by the toiling and exploited masses of the East and West.

"And this largely explains the brutal fury with which the imperialist robbers of the world have hurled themselves against Soviet Russia."

And the Great October Proletarian Socialist Revolution did, in fact, call for the furious resistance of the entire capitalist world and savage attacks on the Soviet Union.

Lenin, Stalin and the whole Bolshevik Party clearly saw that the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie would endeavour by force of arms and by every other means at its disposal to recover its lost power, and they clearly realized that in order to protect the existence of the young Soviet state, repulse the Russian and foreign counter-revolutionaries and crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie, the new state must create a powerful armed force—a Red Army.

Tremendous burdens fell upon the shoulders of Lenin and Stalin from the earliest days of the October Socialist Revolution. The Smolny Institute in Petrograd became the general headquarters of the fighting forces of the revolution, where Lenin, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky and Sverdlov often went days and nights without sleep.

At a later date, in his article "Three Years of the Proletarian Dictatorship," Stalin wrote of this period as follows :

"On October 24 . . . we, a small group of Bolsheviks headed by Comrade Lenin, having at our disposal the Petrograd Soviet (it was then Bolshevik), an inconsiderable Red Guard and nothing but a small and still rather unconsolidated Communist Party . . . having deposed the representatives of the bourgeoisie, handed over the power of government to the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies."

Whole volumes could be written—and will be written—on how Lenin and Stalin worked to build the first Socialist state in the world, and how Stalin, together with Lenin down to 1924, and, after Lenin's death, at the head of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party and together with the whole Party, went on building the Socialist state, staunchly defending it, and, with all the strength, will and indomitable energy of his revolutionary genius, fortified and strengthened the land of Soviets, the Land of Socialism.

There was no past experience to draw upon in the building of such a state. The Paris Commune had been all too short-lived to serve as a guide, and everything had to be started from the beginning; a new proletarian state had to be built up and the old bourgeois machinery of state destroyed.

When the Bolsheviks took to arms in October, 1917, they fully realized what a tremendous task they were undertaking.

The vast work of building a new world was helped by Marxian science, which enabled the Bolsheviks to find

their bearings in the new and complex situation, furnished them with a knowledge of the laws of social development, and supplied the first, although rough, outline of a programme for this work of construction. A repulse had to be given to the numerous attacks of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, to its attempts, by means of military action and sabotage, to restore the power of the capitalists and landlords.

In this building of the new Socialist state, Stalin played a tremendous part.

Many new institutions arose in the Soviet state, for which there was no precedent. The People's Commissariat for the Affairs of the Nationalities, for example, was the first of its kind in history, as was also the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, formed somewhat later. Both these Commissariats were placed in the charge of Stalin.

If we leave aside the short-lived Paris Commune, the prototype of the proletarian state, the dictatorship of the proletariat was something quite new in the history of mankind. Lenin defined this dictatorship as a power manifested alike in military activity, in economic organization, in the suppression and eradication of all the reactionary forces of the old society, and in the creation of a new, Socialist culture. And, indeed, from the very first day of the revolution the Bolsheviks were faced with tasks of the utmost urgency in the most varied spheres: administrative, organizational, military, economic, educational, the sphere of propaganda and agitation, culture. The path of advance had to be illuminated by the light of theory: Stalin's articles in the "Rabochy Put" were of inestimable value as a guide, as were also the more important decrees of the Soviet government. The Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, published on November 2 (15), 1917, over the joint signatures of Lenin and Stalin, and the Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People, adopted at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets in January, 1918, were written by Lenin in close collaboration with Stalin. The decree for the confiscation of the Putilov Works and other plants was signed by Stalin, deputizing for Lenin on the Council of People's Commissars.

At the same time a ruthless fight had to be waged against the blacklegs in the October Revolution—Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov and the others who deserted at this moment of trial. These wretched cowards preferred to keep out of harm's way and rendered a service to the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Together with Lenin, Stalin vigorously fought these traitors to the revolution.

This was a fight on two fronts, for it was essential at the same time relentlessly to expose the so-called "Left Communists," who, together with the Trotskyites and the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries," were doing immense harm to the Soviet Government and the Communist Party.

The most burning question at that time was the conclusion of peace at the earliest possible moment. In setting out to conquer power, the Bolshevik Party had united the masses, the workers, peasants, soldiers and sailors around the demand for an early conclusion of peace. The country was worn out by four years of war. The imperialist war had to be terminated at all costs. The fatigue of the masses could not be ignored. Lenin and Stalin with the unswerving aim of defending and consolidating the Soviet Republic, the bulwark of world revolution, clearly realized how essential it was to secure a respite from the war, however brief, no matter what the cost. They therefore insisted on the conclusion of peace at the earliest possible moment.

The Soviet government called upon all the nations of the world to end the war by a democratic peace. But the British, French, American and Japanese imperialists rejected the proposal. Soviet Russia could therefore emerge from the war only by concluding a separate peace with Germany. Drastic as were the terms dictated by the German imperialists, peace had to be consented to at any price in order to escape from the clutches of the imperialist war. The "Left Communists" and the Trotskyites endeavoured to frustrate the cause of peace. Their ring-leaders—Trotsky, Bukharin, Pyatakov and Radek—went so far as to conspire with the enemies of the Bolshevik Party for the overthrow of the Soviet regime, for the creation of a new government headed by Trotsky, and for the arrest and assassination of Lenin and Stalin and of other leaders of the Bolshevik Party who were loyal to Communism. Kamenev, Zinoviev, Trotsky and the "Left Communists" carried on a fierce struggle against Lenin, Stalin, Sverdlov and the other advocates of peace. The "Left Communists" went so far as to consent to the downfall of the Soviet regime.

"Never, it seems," Stalin says in "On the Opposition," "did the struggle in the Party among the Bolsheviks reach such a pitch of ferocity as during this period, the period of the Brest-Litovsk Peace."

At a meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party on February 23, 1918, Stalin joined with Lenin in attacking the Trotskyites and "Left Communists." "Either a respite," he said, "or the downfall of the revolution."

"The question," he further said, "stands as follows—either

our revolution is defeated and the revolution in Europe is fettered, or we secure a respite and consolidate our position."

It was only thanks to the firmness of Lenin, Stalin and Sverdlov and of other Bolsheviks loyal to Lenin, that the "Left Communists" were defeated. The majority of the Central Committee supported Lenin and Stalin. So did the Party, which thus took the right path, notwithstanding the drastic terms of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, of which Lenin, writing in an article entitled "A Distressful Peace," on the day following the decision to sign it, wrote "Intolerably severe are the terms of peace. Nevertheless, history will claim its own . . . Let us set to work to organize, organize and organize. Despite all trials, the future is ours."

Very important was the work performed by the Soviet government in this and the subsequent period in the settlement of a number of complicated problems relating to the organization of the national republics, in the adjustment of various conflicts that arose within them, and in explaining the national policy to the Party and to the world from the Marxist-Leninist standpoint. Stalin was the invariable reporter on the national question at all congresses, conferences and meetings. It was he, too, who drew up the most important decisions on the national question, and it was he who drafted the first Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic).

On April 27, 1918, on Lenin's proposal, Stalin was appointed plenipotentiary of the R.S.F.S.R. in the negotiations with the Ukrainian Rada. The Ukrainian Rada was a bourgeois government which had seized power in the Ukraine with the assistance of foreign forces of intervention, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. When conflict arose between the Ukrainian Rada and the Soviet Government, Stalin was sent to the Ukraine; there he ascertained the true political character of the Rada, which was playing the part of a broker and pander; it stood for a division of power between the bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the proletariat and the peasantry, on the other. The Bolshevik Party did not share power with the bourgeoisie, but overthrew it. Stalin brilliantly carried out the wishes of the Party, and led the Ukrainian masses in this period of their struggle against the Rada. He also played a tremendous part in the sovietization of Byelorussia.

Stalin arranged and presided at the Constituent Congress of the Tatar-Bashkir Republic. The speech he made at this congress, which was published in "Pravda" of May 10, 1918, ended with the following appeal to the

Bashkir and Tatar peoples and to all the Mohammedan nations of the East:

Of no less importance was the part played by Stalin beacon to the Mohammedan nations of the East, lighting the path to their emancipation from oppression."

Of no less importance was the part played by Stalin in the emancipation of the peoples of Transcaucasia from the rule of the Mensheviks, Dashnaks and Mussavatists,\* and of the national-deviators who had wormed their way into the ranks of the Bolshevik Party.

In this period of tremendous successes of the Soviet Republic, which Lenin called the "triumphal march of the Soviet power," it was necessary to begin laying the foundations of a Socialist economic system. In this, however, the Soviet government encountered the gravest difficulties. Hardest of all was the food situation. When the Bolsheviks had taken power in October, 1917, there was only a two days' stock of provisions in Leningrad and it was only after the most energetic search in every store and warehouse that Stalin managed to secure a ten days' supply of bread. It was no empty threat of Ryabushinsky and the other gentlemen of his kind that they would strangle the revolution with the gaunt hand of famine.

And so we find Stalin entrusted with the job of organizing the food supply. A decision of the Council of People's Commissars of May 29, 1918, signed by Lenin, states: "People's Commissar Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, Member of the Council of People's Commissars, is appointed by the Council of People's Commissars Director-General of Food Affairs in the South of Russia."

This meant a real "war for bread," for the most fertile regions had been cut off by the Whiteguards. And when Stalin entered on the work of food supply he very soon became convinced that grain would have to be won by force of arms. On May 23, 1918, in one of his talks with Lenin over the telephone, Stalin, who had left for the South before the decision of the Council of People's Commissars mentioned, said:

"There are large stocks of grain in the North Caucasus, but they cannot be sent north because the railway has been cut. Until the line has been restored, the transport of grain is out of the question. An expedition has been sent to the Samara and Saratov provinces, but it will not be possible to consign grain to you in the next few days. We hope to restore the line in about ten days. Hold on as

\* MUSSAVATISTS. The Mussavat was the Musselman Democratic Party, established in 1912, in Azerbaijan. It advocated capitalism, the unity of near eastern Mohammedan peoples under the Turkish Empire. Supported tsarism during the 1914-1918 war. Fought the Baku commune in 1918. Assisted Denikin in 1920.



Stalin as a young man.



House where Stalin lived in Siberian exile, 1913—1917.



Stalin in exile in Turukhansk district, 1903.

best you can: issue meat and fish, which we can send you in abundance. Things will be easier in about a week."

A little while later, Stalin wired Lenin saying:

"You will receive 160 carloads of grain and 46 carloads of fish by this route. The rest will be sent through Saratov."

Such were the conditions in which the work of food supply had to be organized. A counter-revolutionary movement was spreading in the Don Region, and Tsaritsyn (now Stalingrad) was acquiring great strategical importance. The kulaks\*—brutal enemies of the working people—were stirring up revolt everywhere in an endeavour to stifle the Soviet government with the hand of famine. Matters were still further complicated by a revolt of the kulak party—the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries—in Moscow at the beginning of July, 1918.

Replying to a letter from Lenin on the subject of possible action by the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries in Tsaritsyn, Stalin said:

"As to the hysterical ones, rest assured, our hand will not falter. We shall treat enemies like enemies."

It would have been difficult to find another man who could do as much as Stalin in the matter of organizing the food supply, and Lenin attached great importance to his going to Tsaritsyn. A proclamation of the Council of People's Commissars "To All the Toiling People" stated:

"The seizure of certain junction points on the Siberian Railway by the counter-revolutionaries will, of course, affect the food supply of the starving country for a time, but the Russian, French, British and Czechoslovakian imperialists will not succeed in starving the revolution into submission. The South-East is coming to the aid of the starving North. People's Commissar Stalin, who is at present in Tsaritsyn, where he is directing the procuring of food from the Don and the Kuban, informs us by wire of the huge supplies of grain which he hopes to dispatch to the North in the course of a week."

Stalin perceived what a treacherous and fatal policy Trotsky was pursuing in the army. He kept Lenin informed of the drastic state of affairs at the front and declared that Trotsky was pursuing a suspicious policy that was obviously to the advantage of the Whiteguards and the foreign invaders. He demanded that the direction of the armies be taken out of Trotsky's hands. Lenin placed the utmost confidence in Stalin and the latter was charged with the task of "establishing order, consolidating the detachments into regular units and establishing a proper command, after

\* KULAKS. Rich farmers, usually also village money lenders. The word is Russian for "fist."

dismissing all insubordinates." (Quoted by Voroshilov in "Stalin and the Red Army.")

Stalin took over the direction of the Revolutionary Council of the Southern Front and in a very short space of time succeeded in reconstructing the army, forming efficient divisions, brigades and regiments, improving military supplies and clearing both the army and the rear of counter-revolutionary elements. In this tremendous work, Stalin had the support of faithful assistants like Voroshilov, Kirov, Orjonikidze, Budyonny, Shchadenko and Mekhlis.

On a written instruction from Trotsky which ran counter to Stalin's measures, the latter wrote: "To be disregarded." It was only thanks to the firm and correct policy pursued by Stalin that the Tsaritsyn front was consolidated and the enemy routed and flung back beyond the Don.

But while engaged in defending the Soviet Republic, arms in hand, Stalin never forgot another weapon and never suspended his literary labours. His articles in "Pravda" at this period deal with some of the most urgent questions of the revolution from a Bolshevik standpoint, supply Bolshevik answers to them, and give a Bolshevik rebuff to the enemies of Marxism.

One of these articles was "The October Revolution and the National Question" ("Pravda," November 6 and 19, 1918. Later included in "Marxism and the National and Colonial Question"). In addition to writing for "Pravda," he wrote a number of articles for the Tsartisyn press.

Thus we find that in this early period of the Soviet Republic, Stalin displayed extraordinary ability in the spheres of organization, administration, economics and military affairs. He won for himself ever greater prestige in the Party, trust in him grew stronger than ever, for everyone saw that he was wholeheartedly devoted to the cause of the revolution and that all his powers of mind were bent on its defence and on the consolidation of its gains. He won authority by his indefatigable activities and his boundless devotion to the cause of the Socialist revolution.

Revolution teaches, and Stalin, while guiding huge masses, himself always learnt from them and from the revolution.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CIVIL WAR

The Bolsheviks never believed that the proletarian dictatorship could be established and consolidated and a Socialist state set up without a civil war—that the parasitic classes, whose rule had been overthrown by the October Proletarian Socialist Revolution, would not put up a savage resistance.

The fact that Russia had emerged from the war by revolutionary means was a transition from imperialist war to civil war. The Russian and foreign bourgeoisie at once mobilized forces to combat the Soviet government. The revolt of the Czechoslovakian legion—engineered and carefully prepared by the British and French imperialists and the Russian counter-revolutionaries—the Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—marked the beginning of a civil war, instigated by the imperialists against the Soviet government.

"Already in the first half of 1918," the "History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)" states: "two definite forces took shape that were prepared to embark upon the overthrow of the Soviet power, namely, the foreign imperialists of the Entente and the counter-revolutionaries at home. . . .

"The conditions of the struggle against the Soviet power dictated a union of the two anti-Soviet forces, foreign and domestic. And this union was effected in the first half of 1918.

"This was how the foreign military intervention against the Soviet power supported by counter-revolutionary revolts of its foes at home originated.

"This was the end of the respite in Russia and the beginning of the Civil War, which was a war of the workers and peasants of the nations of Russia against the foreign and domestic enemies of the Soviet power." ("History of the C.P.S.U.[B.]")

The five principal fronts of civil war which formed in various parts of Russia demanded a colossal exertion of effort. The main forces of counter-revolution were concentrated on the Eastern Front, headed by Kolchak, the Southern Front, headed by Denikin, the North-Western

Front, headed by Rodzyanko and Yudenich, the Polish Front and the Wrangel Front. In the period of the Civil War nine-tenths of the energies of the Party and of the Government were consumed in combating the enemies of the Soviet regime. Fifty per cent of the members of the Communist Party and of the Young Communist League—and in the war areas one hundred per cent—were mobilized to resist the Whiteguards and the foreign invaders.

The part played by Stalin in the direction of the struggle was immense. It is described by Voroshilov in the following words :

"In the period from 1918 to 1920 Comrade Stalin was probably the only person whom the Central Committee shifted about from front to front, selecting the most vulnerable spots, the places where the threat to the revolution was most imminent." (K. Voroshilov, "Stalin and the Red Army.")

Having, on the instructions of the Party, undertaken the highly important task of organizing the food supply of the country, Stalin was obliged to take charge of the military operations in order to defeat the counter-revolution and liberate the regions it had seized.

We now have a number of writings, films and plays which depict step by step the activities of Lenin and Stalin in these difficult years, when every bushel of grain was precious and was secured at the cost of incredible effort, when the country, surrounded by foreign invaders, gripped in the clutches of the blockade, and starving and impoverished as a result of the imperialist war, had to bend all its energies to repulse and defeat its enemies. In this defeat of the counter-revolution Stalin played a very important part. On August 4, 1918, he wrote to Lenin from Tsaritsyn that he had "to start all over again from the beginning : we arranged the matter of supply, set up a Military Operations Department, established communication with all sections of the front, rescinded the old orders, criminal orders, I should say, and only after all that, launched an offensive on Kalach and the South in the direction of Tikhoretsk."

The old tsarist army had collapsed ; the new army, the Red Army, was only in process of formation. In the creation of this army Stalin took an active part. Its ranks had been swelled by all sorts of undisciplined elements in the early period of the Civil War. Guerrilla methods, in the worst sense of the term, were preventing the building of a regular army with a single command and a single, military discipline. A disciplined regular Red Army had to be created at all costs. At the Eighth Congress of the Party there was a fairly strong "Military Opposition." It embraced, on the one hand, men who really encouraged

lack of discipline and guerrilla methods in the Red Army, and, on the other, loyal Bolsheviks who were dissatisfied with Trotsky's direction of the army and resented his treacherous treatment of Communists. The Eighth Congress put its foot down on guerrilla methods, but at the same time adopted a number of decisions to counteract Trotsky's pernicious activities. At this Congress, Stalin joined Lenin in fighting for the creation of a disciplined Red Army. "Either," he said, "we create a real worker and peasant—primarily a peasant—army, a strictly disciplined army, and defend the Republic, or we perish." (Quoted in the "History of the C.P.S.U.[B.]")

Stalin proved himself in the Civil War to be an outstanding military leader and an experienced strategist. Towards the end of 1918 a highly critical situation arose on the Eastern Front. Kolchak had captured Perm and was threatening to seize the north and establish contact with the foreign forces of intervention there. The Third Army, demoralized by inefficient commanders, was in disorderly retreat and suffering heavy losses. The Central Committee of the Party decided "to appoint a Party investigating commission consisting of two members of the Central Committee, Dzerzhinsky and Stalin, to investigate thoroughly the causes of the surrender of Perm and the recent defeats on the Ural Front, and to fully ascertain all the attendant circumstances." (K. Voroshilov, "Stalin and the Red Army.")

But it was not in Stalin's nature to content himself with a mere investigation. He adopted a number of organizational measures for the consolidation of the army, procured arms, cleaned out inefficient commanders, improved the work of the Party and the Soviet organs in the district and strengthened the organs of the proletarian dictatorship there. "As the result of all these measures not only was the enemy's further advance checked, but in January, 1919, the Eastern Front launched an offensive, and on the right flank Uralsk was taken. This is how Comrade Stalin understood and carried out his task of 'investigating the causes of the catastrophe.' He investigated and established these causes and right there and then, by his own efforts, eliminated them and achieved the necessary improvement." (*Ibid.*)

Considerable assistance to the Party in liquidating the Eastern Front was rendered by Frunze and Kuibyshev.

Although by this time Kolchak had suffered several severe reverses and his advance on the European side of the Urals was checked, he had, nevertheless, not been crushed. And in order to divert the forces of the Red

Army from the East and thus help Kolchak, the foreign powers drew up a plan for capturing Petrograd with the aid of the Whiteguards. For this purpose the enemy formed an army on Estonian territory under the command of General Yudenich, which advanced rapidly on Petrograd, endangering the cradle of the Revolution. In Petrograd itself and in the Baltic Fleet, at Kronstadt, the enemy had his agents—traitors among the officers. This enabled him to seize certain strongly fortified places and the forts of Krasnaya Gorka and Seraya Loshad, which had seemed impregnable. Whiteguard forces under General Bulak-Balakhovich advanced on Pskov.

A serious situation arose. Stalin was appointed to deal with the danger. He restored discipline on this front with an iron hand, organized political work among the troops, arranged for regular supplies, inspired confidence in the ranks of the Red Army, mustered the necessary reinforcements, and ruthlessly crushed the enemy and the traitors. Although "prominent experts" asserted that forts like Krasnaya Gorka and Seraya Loshad could not be captured from the sea, this feat was accomplished on Stalin's orders and he was soon able to wire Lenin:

"Following the capture of Fort Krasnaya Gorka, Fort Seraya Loshad has been captured. Their guns are in perfect order . . . . The naval experts assert that the capture of Krasnaya Gorka from the sea runs counter to all naval science. I can only deplore this so-called science. The swift capture of Gorka was due to the grossest interference in the operations by me and by civilians generally, even to the point of countermanding orders on land and sea and imposing my own. I consider it my duty to declare that I shall continue to act in this way in future, despite all my reverence for science." (Quoted by Voroshilov in "Stalin and the Red Army.")

And six days later, Stalin was able to report to Lenin that a profound change for the better had taken place at the front and that the enemy was in retreat. The adversary was driven into Estonia. This made it possible to rout Kolchak, too, who fled with the remnants of his army to Irkutsk. On the way he was arrested and shot by the Soviet authorities in Irkutsk. The plan for the defeat of Kolchak had been drawn up by Stalin in face of the opposition of Trotsky, who had not wanted the complete defeat of Kolchak and had demanded that the pursuit of his army be halted. But even this did not put an end to foreign intervention and counter-revolution. The intervening powers now placed all their hopes on General Denikin, who was at that time in occupation of the Kuban Region and was forming a "volunteer" army, made up of

officers, cadets and other Whiteguard scum. In the summer of 1919, Denikin, having received arms, equipment, money and stores from the intervening powers, assumed the offensive. Trotsky's orders were calculated to facilitate the advance of Denikin to the utmost. As a result, in the latter half of September Denikin's forces captured Orel and approached Tula, a big arsenal centre only four hours' journey from Moscow.

At this juncture the Bolshevik Party issued the call, "All Out to Fight Denikin!" The workers and peasants eagerly rallied to the support of the Soviet government. They knew that a victory for General Denikin would mean the restoration of capitalism and the return of the tsar and the landlords. In order to secure Denikin's defeat, the Bolshevik Party sent Stalin, Voroshilov, Orjonikidze, Kirov, Budyonny, Shchadenko and Mekhlis to the Southern Front. The Central Committee took the direction of the operations of the Red Army in the South out of the hands of Trotsky and rejected his treacherous plan, which would have doomed the army to certain defeat. This plan provided for the advance of the Red Army through roadless country largely inhabited by Cossacks who sympathized with the counter-revolutionaries. Stalin proposed a different plan, namely, to direct the main blow of the Red Army through Kharkov, the Donbas and Rostov. Stalin's plan was accepted and put into execution. Lenin personally wrote the order to field headquarters to act in accordance with this plan. Denikin was routed, and at the beginning of 1920 the whole of the Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus were cleared of Whiteguard forces. An outstanding part of this operation was played by the First Mounted Army, formed in accordance with Stalin's directions.

The defeat of Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenich was a victory of major importance. England, France and Italy were obliged to lift the blockade on Soviet Russia. But even this did not put an end to the intervention. In August, 1920, hostilities broke out on a large scale in the South, this time under the command of a new "hero" of counter-revolution—Baron Wrangel. On August 2, 1920, the Central Committee of the Party adopted the following decision:

"In view of Wrangel's successes and the anxiety in the Kuban, the Wrangel front must be regarded as an absolutely independent front of tremendous significance and dealt with separately. Comrade Stalin is instructed to form a Revolutionary Military Council and concentrate all his efforts on the Wrangel front. . . ." (Quoted in Voroshilov's "Stalin and the Red Army.")

The foreign powers still hoped to find a force capable

of overthrowing the Soviet government. And when, in April, 1920, Wrangel developed operations in the South, the Polish government, instigated by the imperialists, launched an offensive in its turn on the land of the Soviets. In April, 1920, the Poles invaded the Ukraine and captured Kiev.

Stalin was appointed a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the South-Western Front. The victory of the Soviet forces on this front, too, was in a large measure due to his efforts, and a big part in the rout of the Polish "White" forces was again played by the First Mounted Army. However, Trotsky and his followers thwarted the success of the Red Army. Owing to the fault of Trotsky and Tukhachevsky, part of the Red Army advanced too far ahead, lost contact with the main reserves and found itself without ammunition. This enabled Poland, with the help of the British and French imperialists, to cut off the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, which remained under the yoke of the Polish gentry up to the autumn of 1939.

Voroshilov, who fought side by side with and under the personal direction of Stalin, describes the latter's brilliant strategy in the Civil War in the following words:

"What is most striking is Comrade Stalin's ability rapidly to grasp the concrete situation and act accordingly. A merciless foe of laxity, insubordination and haphazard methods, Comrade Stalin never hesitated, when the interests of the revolution so demanded, to take upon himself the responsibility for extreme measures, for making a clean sweep of things. When the revolutionary situation required it, Comrade Stalin was ready to defy any regulation, any order from above." (K. Voroshilov, "Stalin and the Red Army.")

But at this, as at every other period, Stalin was guided by one supreme law—the will of the Party and the interests of the revolution.

On November 27, 1919, on Lenin's initiative, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee conferred on Stalin the Order of the Red Banner for his services in the Civil War.

During this period he added to his tremendous experience in numerous fields of revolutionary activity one more experience—experience as a military commander, as a leader and organizer of the Red Army, as an organizer of the victories of the Soviet government on the fronts of war.

## CHAPTER IX

### PEACE AND ECONOMIC RESTORATION

From 1914 to the end of 1920 our vast country had been continuously engaged in war—first in the imperialist war and then in the Civil War. This had reduced the country to a state of extreme economic chaos, poverty and ruin. It was in this state of affairs that the Red Army which had grown to five million men had to be demobilized. The military and political alliance between the working class and the peasantry which had existed during the Civil War no longer satisfied the peasantry. Before the work of peaceful construction could be proceeded with, a new means of guiding the masses had to be found. The methods of compulsion practised in the time of War Communism had to be replaced by methods of persuasion. The alliance of the working class and the peasantry had to be built on a new footing, and economic policy had to be changed.

This change was made all the more difficult by the fact that during the Civil War, at the moment when the power passed into the hands of the Bolshevik Party, the ranks of the latter had been swollen by petty-bourgeois elements from the camp of the Mensheviks, Socialist- Revolutionaries, Bundists and Anarchists, many of whom, on joining the Party, had not discarded their anti-Bolshevik theories of the past, were unable to do so, and were spreading doubt as to the correctness of the Party's line and causing vacillation among the unstable members. They formed a recruiting ground for oppositionist groups of every kind : Trotskyites, "Left Communists," anarchosyndicalists and decentralists. When the Party passed to the work of peaceful construction, to the New Economic Policy, to the restoration of the economic life of the country, it was these unstable elements who displayed the greatest vacillation, and they had to be combated vigorously and relentlessly.

In 1920, on Lenin's recommendations, a State Commission for the Electrification of Russia (known as the GOELRO) was set up. This commission drew up a plan of electrification which would require ten years to fulfil.

This was the first programme for the socialist industrialization of the country, which, as Lenin conceived it, was to become the second programme of the Party. This brilliant plan was opposed by Trotsky and Rykov, but Stalin warmly supported it. On receiving a letter from Lenin with a copy of the plan of the GOELRO, Stalin at once replied that he considered it a masterly draft of a truly single and truly state economic plan, and that it was "the only Marxist attempt in our time to place the Soviet superstructure of economically backward Russia on a really practical technical and production basis."

He proposed that not a minute more be lost in idle talk about the plan, that a practical start be made immediately and that at least one-third of our work be devoted to this purpose.

In 1920 a controversy on the trade union question arose in the Party. It arose because Trotsky and his followers had proposed that the policy of the period of War Communism be continued in every sphere of economic and Party work, and that the "screw be put on tighter." Their purpose was to undermine the confidence of the masses in the Bolshevik Party, to create a gulf between the Party and the masses, and thus undermine the foundations of the proletarian dictatorship. Although each of these groups had its "own plan," their joint efforts were directed against Lenin and Stalin, and against the Bolsheviks loyal to Communism.

Lenin and Stalin joined in a united front in attacking these disorganizers and enemies of Party unity and of a consistent Marxist policy. Stalin wrote a number of articles at this period in "Pravda" in defence of Lenin's Party line. On October 27 of that year he addressed a regional Communist conference in Vladikavkaz, where he demonstrated that the victory of the October Socialist Revolution had created the requisite conditions for the successful development and final victory of Socialism.

At the Tenth Party Congress in the spring of 1921, Stalin made a report on the national question, which was of fundamental importance. It drew the attention of the Party to the need of giving economic and cultural assistance to the nationalities which had been oppressed under the tsars, and to the need of combating the deviations on the national question—especially the chief danger at that juncture—Dominant-nation, Great-Russian chauvinism.

In the summer of 1921 Stalin fell ill. Lenin displayed the greatest solicitude and concern for his health. On learning of his illness, he at once sent the following telegram to Sergo Orjonikidze : "Please let me know what is the state of Stalin's health and the opinion of the doc-

tors." Upon receiving a reply, he again wired : " Communicate name and address of doctor treating Stalin. How long has he been ill ? " In the autumn of 1921 Lenin wrote to the commandant of the Kremlin requesting him to transfer Stalin to more comfortable quarters, as the noise from the adjoining kitchen prevented him sleeping at an early hour in the morning ; this was to be done at once. and the commandant was to inform him whether he could do so, and when.

In a note to his secretary in December, 1921, Lenin requested the latter to remind him in the morning that he had to see Stalin, and before that to connect him by telephone with Doctor Obukh who was treating Stalin.

These documents show Lenin's deep affection for Stalin and concern for his welfare, and exemplify the attitude of Communist to Communist, and of the friendship between these two great leaders of Bolshevism.

On July 6, 1921, Stalin addressed a meeting of the Tiflis Party organizations on the subject of the immediate tasks of the Communists in Georgia and Transcaucasia. At this time a group of nationalists in the Caucasus was opposing the formation of a federation of the Transcaucasian republics which had been proposed by Stalin. Lenin heartily supported Stalin's proposal, and the Transcaucasian Federation of Soviet Republics was formed. The national-deviators of Transcaucasia subsequently became outright counter-revolutionaries. By his vigorous opposition in 1921, and his recognition of what these embryonic counter-revolutionary ideas would develop into Stalin revealed his great foresight.

The Tenth Party Congress decided to introduce the New Economic Policy (NEP). Stalin was one of its strongest supporters and defenders and later gave a classical definition of the meaning of this policy :

" NEP is a special policy of the proletarian state designed to tolerate capitalism but retain the key positions in the hands of the proletarian state ; it is designed for the struggle between the capitalist and socialist elements, for the growth of the importance of the socialist elements at the cost of the capitalist elements, for the victory of the socialist elements over the capitalist elements, for the abolition of classes and the laying of the foundation of a socialist economic system."

The Central Committee elected at the Eleventh Party Congress appointed Stalin General Secretary of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.). This was a new post in the Party. The election of Stalin testified to the fact that Lenin, the general staff of the Communist Party, and the Party as a whole had the most profound confidence in him.

and set the highest value on his decisive role in the Party. The importance of this role both in the Party and the state grew from day to day, and the duties of General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party consumed a great deal of his time and energies. Yet simultaneously with this he performed extensive duties as People's Commissar for the Affairs of the Nationalities and People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. This called down upon him the attacks of his enemies, but Lenin vigorously repulsed them at the Eleventh Party Congress. Replying to the Trotskyite Preobrazhensky, who was subsequently exposed as an enemy of the people, he said :

"Preobrazhensky has frivolously complained that Stalin is in charge of two commissariats. . . . But what can we do to maintain the existing situation in the People's Commissariat for the Affairs of the Nationalities and to get to the bottom of all these Turkestan, Caucasian and other questions ? After all, they are political problems ! And they are problems that must be solved ; they are problems which have been occupying European states for hundreds of years and which have been solved in the democratic republics to only the smallest degree. We are solving these problems, and we must have a man to whom any representative of the nationalities may come and discuss matters at length. Where are we to find such a man ? I think that even Preobrazhensky could not name anybody else but Comrade Stalin.

"The same is true of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. The work is tremendous. But to handle the work of investigation properly, we must have a man of authority in charge, otherwise we shall be submerged in petty intrigues."

In the summer of 1922 Lenin fell seriously ill, and even greater burdens fell on Stalin's shoulders. He paid constant visits to Lenin, kept him informed of the state of affairs and took council with him when the doctors permitted it. As soon as Lenin's health had improved a little, he requested Stalin to come and visit him.

In his recollections of this meeting, Stalin relates how avidly Lenin interested himself in political questions. "'I am not allowed to read the newspapers,' Comrade Lenin remarked ironically, 'and I must not talk politics. I carefully walk around every scrap of paper lying on the table, lest it turn out to be a newspaper and lead to a breach of discipline.'"

"I laughed heartily," Stalin goes on to say, "and lauded Comrade Lenin for his good discipline." ("Stalin on Lenin.")

In December, 1922, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) was formed. A big part in the formation of the Union was directly played by Stalin. It was he who drew up the Treaty of Union, and it was on his report that it was adopted by the First Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. on December 30, 1922. He it was, too, who drafted the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. adopted by the Second Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. The formation of the U.S.S.R. and the adoption of the Constitution was an outstanding victory for the Leninist-Stalinist national policy of the Party. At the Twelfth Party Congress, Stalin, as General Secretary of the Central Committee, made the report on organizational questions. He also made the report on "National Factors in Party and State Affairs." Here, as at the Tenth Congress, he demonstrated the extreme danger of the deviation towards Great-Russian, dominant-nation chauvinism in the national question, and at the same time sharply attacked local chauvinism and the bourgeois nationalists of all shades.

A little later, at a conference summoned by Lenin of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party with responsible workers from the national republics and regions, Stalin exposed a group of Tatar and Bashkir bourgeois-nationalists headed by Sultan-Galiev. This conference, like the decisions of the Twelfth Party Congress on the national question, was of immense value in the struggle against the nationalists and in the consolidation of the national republics.

In October, 1922, Lenin's health had so much improved that he was allowed by his doctors to return to work. With the assistance and support of Stalin, he resumed extensive activities; he attended the meetings of the Council of People's Commissars and a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in October, spoke at the Fourth Congress of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, and made a report at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International on the New Economic Policy and the prospects of world revolution.

On November 20, 1922, Lenin addressed a plenary meeting of the Moscow Soviet on home and foreign policy, in the course of which he expressed the profound conviction that NEP Russia would one day become Socialist Russia. This was the last speech he made in public. He was also preparing to address the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and had even drawn up the plan of his speech, but his health grew steadily worse. He was worried over the question of the monopoly of foreign trade, and he wrote a letter to Stalin to be read at a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Party attacking Bukharin and

other opponents of the state monopoly, accusing them of advocating a kulak policy. This plenary meeting of the Central Committee, at which Stalin presided, gave a vigorous rebuff to the opponents of the state monopoly of foreign trade.

The year 1923 was a year of trial for Lenin, the Bolshevik Party and the entire Soviet country. The task of guiding the affairs of the Party and the Government fell on Stalin's shoulders. The Trotskyites took advantage of Lenin's illness to attack the Bolshevik Party, and directed their main shafts at Stalin as the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. They forced a controversy on the Party, from which, however, it emerged more united than ever, for the Trotskyites and other enemies of Bolshevism were exposed in the eyes of the Party and the masses as people whose aim was to create a second party. Stalin guided the Party with a firm hand along the path laid down by Lenin, in which he was assisted by the great prestige he enjoyed in the Party and the profound confidence of the working people, who knew that through all his career he had been a faithful, staunch and indomitable fighter for Communism.

On December 2, 1923, Stalin addressed a plenary meeting of the Krasnaya Presnya District Committee of the Party and recounted the measures taken by the Central Committee to consolidate the Party and to combat the disorganizers, the Trotskyites and other enemies of Bolshevism.

On December 15, 1923, a proclamation of the Central Committee to all the Party organizations, signed by Stalin, was published in "Pravda" calling for a unanimous struggle against the opportunists. A Party Conference which met in January, 1924, after hearing his report, adopted a resolution condemning the Trotskyites as petty-bourgeois deviators. Bury Trotskyism as an ideological trend!—was the call Stalin issued to the Party at this Conference.

On January 21, 1924, Lenin died. This was a cruel loss to the working-class movement of the whole world, to the Soviet Union and to the Bolshevik Party. But the Party knew that the banner of Lenin was in the trusty hands of a Bolshevik who ever since the nineties of the last century had together with Lenin led the Party through all the vicissitudes of the struggle to the victory of Socialism.

On January 26, 1924, at a Lenin memorial meeting of the Second Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R., Stalin made a solemn vow to hold high and guard the purity of the great title of member of the Party; to guard the unity of our Party as the apple of our eye; to guard and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat; to strengthen

with all our might the alliance of the workers and peasants ; to consolidate and extend the Union of Republics ; to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy ; and to remain true to the principles of the Communist International.

Stalin made this vow in the name of the Party ; and the Party, trained by Lenin and Stalin in a spirit of loyalty to Socialism and to the Communist International, has fulfilled this vow. It was at this moment, when Lenin was dead, that the Party felt the full benefit of Stalin's firm and correct leadership. In vain the enemies of Socialism tried to take advantage of Lenin's death to divert the Bolshevik Party from its tried and tested path, to disintegrate its ranks and to create in its place their own Trotskyite, capitulationist, Menshevik party—a party for the restoration of capitalism. Under Stalin's leadership, these enemies were exposed and routed.

This entailed answering a number of theoretical questions, advancing the theory of Marxism-Leninism. This task was brilliantly performed after Lenin's death by Stalin. A number of articles by him in "Pravda" exposing Trotskyism ; his article "The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists" (included in "Leninism," English Edition), attacking the Menshevism of Trotsky's "Lessons of October" ; his speeches at the plenary meeting of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission in January, 1925, at a meeting of the Moscow Party organizations in May, 1925, and at the Fourteenth Party Congress—all these spoken and written utterances of Stalin helped the Party to smash the Trotskyites and the now emboldened Zinovievites. This ideological defeat of the enemies of Bolshevism would have been impossible without the tremendous theoretical work performed by Stalin.

Of particular value for the ideological training of the members of the Party and the Young Communist League was a series of lectures on "The Foundations of Leninism" delivered by Stalin in April, 1924, at the Sverdlov University. These lectures, supplemented by other of his articles and speeches, have been published in millions of copies and in all countries under the title "Problems of Leninism," which serves as a handbook to every Communist. In the "Problems of Leninism" he gives a splendid definition of Leninism: "Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular." (*Leninism*, English Edition.)

In this book, Stalin deals with the historical origins of

Leninism, with its method, the theory of Marxism-Leninism and its significance, and with the basic questions of this theory: the dictatorship of the proletariat, the peasant problem, the national and colonial problem, strategy and tactics, the Party, and Leninist style of work.

The book has been translated into scores of languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and of other countries. It serves to educate and train millions of stalwart members of the Communist Party; it instructs them in Marxist-Leninist dialectics, helps them to understand complex problems of home and foreign policy, to grasp the meaning of intricate social phenomena and to study the laws of development of society.

Stalin's leadership enabled the Party to solve the difficult problems that arose in the restoration period. Difficult as were the first steps of the socialist advance towards a new economic policy, they resulted in successes which improved the position of the workers and peasants. But constructive work could not be carried out unless the tasks were seen in their true perspective. The path towards a Socialist, classless society had to be mapped. The enemies of Bolshevism, who were actually hostile to Socialism, tried to prove that a Socialist, classless society could not be built in the Soviet Union unless Socialism was victorious in other countries. They disputed Lenin's doctrine concerning the victory of Socialism in one country.

The October Socialist Revolution had resulted in the political victory of the working class. It now had to be shown that Socialism would oust, eliminate, destroy the capitalist elements economically as well. The question was whether Socialism could be built in our country. One of the greatest services Stalin rendered, not only to the working-class of our country but also to the working-class movement of the whole world, was the plain and direct answer he gave. He showed that the final victory of Socialism, in the sense of a guarantee against intervention and attempts to restore capitalism in the U.S.S.R., could only be ensured by the overthrow of capitalism in other countries, that is, by the elimination of the capitalist encirclement. But, as far as internal affairs were concerned, all the conditions ensuring the victory of Socialism and the building of a classless Socialist society existed in the U.S.S.R.

This question was discussed at the fourteenth Party Conference and the Fourteenth Party Congress. An overwhelming majority of the members of the Bolshevik Party supported Stalin's view, which was also adopted by the Communist International. He took an active and leading part in the labours of the Fifth Congress of the Communist International and of the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the



V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin at the Gorky Country Place (near Moscow), 1922.



J. V. Stalin and Maxim Gorki at the Mausoleum  
of V. I. Lenin, 1931.

Executive Committee of the Communist International, and his assistance was as important to the fraternal Communist Parties as the theoretical and practical guiding instructions of Lenin had been.

The Party's policy of ousting and completely eliminating the capitalist elements and of building a Socialist classless society was opposed by the Trotskyites; and at the end of 1924 it was found that they had been joined by the "New Opposition," consisting of the capitulationists Zinoviev and Kamenev, and their small band of followers.

This new, Trotskyite-Zinovievite joint opposition was already fully marked at the Fourteenth Party Congress. It is to the credit of Stalin that, from the very inception of the New Opposition, he exposed its anti-Bolshevik character and thus made it possible to demolish it. Speaking subsequently of the significance of the Fourteenth Party Congress in his "Problems of Leninism," he said: "The historical significance of the Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union lies in the fact that it was able to expose the very root of the mistakes of the 'New Opposition,' that it spurned their scepticism and snivelling, that it clearly and distinctly indicated the path of the further struggle for Socialism, opened before the Party the prospect of victory, and thus armed the proletariat with an invincible faith in the victory of socialist construction."

Thus, in this most difficult period of the struggle, Stalin led the Party to victory over the forces of the enemy, performed tremendous work in the realm of theory, and gave the Party a splendid guide to action in the "Problems of Leninism." He analysed a number of cardinal theoretical questions connected with the struggle of the Party for the final victory of Socialism. Already at that period, Stalin outlined the first practical steps towards the socialist industrialization of the country and the collectivization of agriculture. He was responsible for the major documents and measures of the period directed against the nationalists and towards the creation of the great commonwealth of nations, the U.S.S.R. The first Constitution of the U.S.S.R., for example, is one of the outstanding documents of the age, whose importance at the time was no less than the new Stalin Constitution of the Soviet Union adopted later at the Eighth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R.

## CHAPTER X

### THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION (1926-1929)

Marx and Engels had bequeathed us only a rough outline of the changes capitalist society would undergo after the proletariat had conquered power. In the "Communist Manifesto" they enumerated the measures the Socialist proletariat would carry out in the event of its victory. This programme of the Communists had not been put into effect anywhere before the working class of Russia conquered power in 1917. The shortlived Paris Commune provided no opportunity to the working class of France to carry out this programme, although the Commune did begin to adopt a number of measures designed to effect a radical change of the social system.

The very early years of the Soviet regime made it possible to give effect to a number of fundamental measures which cut the ground from under the feet of the exploiting classes, such as the nationalization of the land and its transfer to the peasants for their use, the nationalization of the mills and factories, means of transportation and the mines, and the nationalization of the banks.

However, in the early years of the Soviet government, owing to the Civil War, the plan for the laying of the foundations of a socialist economic system had to be postponed. Only the general features of this plan had been outlined—on the one hand, in the programme of the Bolshevik Party adopted at the Eighth Party Congress and, on the other, in the articles Lenin had dictated during his severe illness in January and March, 1923, just before his death. These articles were : "Pages From a Diary"; "On Co-operation"; "Our Revolution"; "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate" (*Selected Works*, Vol. IX) and "Better Fewer, But Better." (*Ibid.*) Together they bear the character of a programme in which Lenin developed his co-operative plan, outlined a brilliant plan of struggle for the socialist reconstruction of the national economy, for the industrialization of the country and for the collectivization of agriculture.

Lenin pointed out that, with the dictatorship of the

proletariat, when all the large-scale means of production were in the hands of the Soviet state, and when the peasantry was being guided by the proletariat. co-operation alone contained all the requisites for the building of a complete Socialist society.

What did the Soviet lack? It lacked civilization, Lenin said, the necessary level of culture. "We must strive to build up a state," he wrote, "in which the workers retain their leadership of the peasants, retain the confidence of the peasants, and, exercising the greatest thrift, remove every trace of superfluity from our social relations." There was nowhere we could turn for assistance, he said: we would have to find the means for the industrialization of the country, for electrification, within the country itself, partly by means of the strictest economy and retrenchment. "We must see to it that . . . every farthing we save goes to develop our large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, hydro-peat, to complete the construction of the Volkov Hydro-Electric Station, etc. In this and in this alone lies our hope. Only when we have done that, shall we, speaking figuratively, be able to swap horses—to swap the impoverished peasant, muzhik horse, the horse of an economy intended for a ruined peasant country, for the horse which the proletariat is seeking and cannot but seek—the horse of large-scale machine industry, electrification, Volkovstroy, etc." (Lenin: *Selected Works*, Vol. IX, pp. 400-401.)

Lenin was profoundly convinced that the Party would take this course, which was the only right one, and that it would succeed in transforming NEP Russia into Socialist Russia.

Let us recall in what difficult conditions the Party had to set about carrying out these recommendations of Lenin and begin the socialist industrialization of the country. Under Stalin's leadership, the Party had only just overcome the difficulties of the restoration period. These difficulties were mainly in home affairs: the poverty and devastation caused by the imperialist war, and the attacks of the Trotskyites and other enemies of Bolshevism. But no less considerable were the difficulties in foreign affairs. The onslaughts of the surrounding capitalist world and the machinations of the imperialists, who tried to take advantage of the difficulties of the Soviet power to overthrow it, had to be repulsed.

Thus, in May 1927, the British Diehards brought about a rupture of diplomatic and trade relations between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. In June, 1927, Russian White-guards in Warsaw assassinated Comrade Voykov, the Soviet

Ambassador to Poland, also with the aim of provoking the U.S.S.R. into some incautious step which would serve as a pretext for war and intervention by the imperialist powers. The provocateurs counted on the support of the Trotskyites, with whose ringleaders—Trotsky, Rakovsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and others—they were in secret conspiracy.

Another difficulty was to find the funds for the industrialization of the country, for the building of huge industrial plants, for the creation of a powerful machine-building industry and defence industry, and the erection of plants for the production of tractors and other complex agricultural machinery, without which it would be impossible to defend the Land of Soviets from the capitalist encirclement. The collectivization of agriculture had to be undertaken on a large scale, for without this the elimination of the kulaks was impossible.

At the end of 1925 the treacherous Kamenev-Zinoviev band again became active. We have seen the struggle these traitors waged against the Party at the time of the Fourteenth Congress. In order to combat them, some of the best Bolsheviks were sent to Leningrad, headed by Sergei Kirov, whom Stalin loved deeply as a loyal Bolshevik, an outstanding organizer and a fiery tribune of the revolution.

In February, 1926, at the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, Stalin spoke in criticism of the Right and "ultra-Left" oppositions. Of great importance were his numerous utterances at this period against the Trotskyite and other enemies of the Party, including his speech at the Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission on July 15, 1926, his theses on the opposition bloc for the Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.), and his report and reply to the debate at this Conference in November, 1926, on the subject of "The Social-Democratic Deviation in Our Party." In these and other utterances, Stalin gave a detailed criticism of the international opposition to the Comintern, to Bolshevism. He exposed the treacherous nature of Trotskyism, and with profound insight foretold the inevitable degeneration of the opposition into an outright counter-revolutionary force. Although at that time the Party was not yet in possession of documentary proof of the direct associations of the Trotskyites with the intelligence services of various foreign states, Stalin gave a masterly analysis from the Marxist standpoint of the theories and practices of the various anti-Bolshevik groups and demonstrated the counter-revolutionary nature of Trotskyism.

Stalin's utterances on the Chinese question were of

great importance for the Bolshevik education of the Comintern ranks and for providing a correct understanding of the course of development of the revolution in the East. They included "The Prospects of the Revolution in China"; his speech in the Chinese Commission of the E.C.C.I. on November 30, 1926; his "Problems of the Chinese Revolution"—theses for propagandists; his talks to the students of the Sun Yat-sen University on May 13, 1927; his speech at the Eighth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on May 24, 1927, on the tasks of the Communist International in connection with the revolution in China. His later work on the drafting of the programme of the Communist International adopted at the Sixth Comintern Congress, endowed the Communist International with a document of the greatest historical value. Stalin helped in formulating the theoretical basis of the International struggle for Communism.

In June, 1926, he addressed the workers of the Transcaucasian central railway shops in Tiflis on the general strike in England and events in Poland. In November, 1926, he made a report at the Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on "The Social-Democratic Deviation in Our Party." In December, 1926, he spoke at the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.—"Once More on the Social-Democratic Deviation in Our Party." In this latter speech he forcefully expounded his and Lenin's doctrine of the possibility of the victory of Socialism in one country—the U.S.S.R.—in spite of the capitalist encirclement.

Having restored the national economy after the war, the Party began to develop socialist construction, and it was essential that the masses should understand clearly what this meant.

"We cannot move forward," Stalin said at the Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.), "without knowing in what direction we must move, without knowing the aim of the movement. We cannot build without prospects, without the certainty that, having begun to build a socialist economic system, we shall be able to complete it. Without clear prospects, without clear aims, the Party cannot guide the work of construction. We cannot live in accordance with Bernstein's precept, 'the movement is everything, the aim nothing.' On the contrary, as revolutionaries we must subordinate our advance, our practical work, to the fundamental class aim of proletarian construction. Otherwise we shall unquestionably and infallibly land in the bog of opportunism."

The Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) decided that immediate steps must be taken to consolidate the predominant position held by large-scale socialist industry

in the economic life of the country. Stalin devoted all his attention, energy, indomitable will and pertinacity to the accomplishment of this main task. It is difficult even to picture the tremendous work he performed in connection with the building of every new enterprise. He attentively watched the work of every factory. Like a careful gardener, he cherished every shoot of the new socialist order; he promoted new people, studied every new manifestation in the life of the workers, in industry, in agriculture and in cultural life. He unfailingly lit the path to victory with the searchlight of Marxist-Leninist theory; he sought and found means of shortening this path; he relentlessly combated every attempt to divert the Party from its adopted course, and was ruthless towards all who would interfere with the advance to Communism.

And yet, in the midst of this vast and constant work of state, Stalin found time for writing and for the reception of numerous delegations. Thus, in April, 1927, were published his theses, "Problems of the Chinese Revolution"; on July 28, 1927, his article, "Notes on Present-Day Themes"; in September, 1927, the interview he gave to the first American labour delegation, and in November 1927, the interview he gave to foreign labour delegations, and his article, "The International Character of the October Revolution." (Included in *Leninism*, English Edition.)

It must be remembered that what appears in the press is only a small part of what Stalin has to write in his daily work, during which he gives countless instructions to Party bodies and to people in charge of the various branches of our economic and cultural life, and reply to innumerable letters on the most varied topics.

In his work, Stalin summarized the extensive experience of socialist development in the U.S.S.R. and of the world revolutionary movement, constantly enriching the Marxist-Leninist theory with new contributions. The doctrine of proletarian internationalism is a keynote in all these works. He teaches and shows us how to consolidate the strength of the Soviet Union—the mainstay of the world proletariat, the fatherland of the working people of the whole world, and the home of Communism.

Stalin paid particular attention to the problems connected with helping the rural population in the socialist reconstruction of agriculture. The work performed by the Party in this period under his guidance on the lines of industrializing the country ensured a mass movement towards collective farming in the countryside in the succeeding period.

An examination of Party decisions, the decisions of plenary meetings of the Central Committee and the Cen-

tral Control Commission, of the Fifteenth Party Conference and of the Fifteenth Party Congress, shows that a tremendous amount of the strength and energies of the Party at this period was consumed on the struggle against the enemies of Bolshevism, against the so-called "Joint Opposition," which, step by step, sank lower and lower towards counter-revolution, treason and treachery to the Party. This struggle was led by Stalin, against whom were directed the attacks of all traitors to the Party, who hatched vile plots for the murder of Stalin and other true sons of the Bolshevik Party.

The attacks of the Trotskyites became particularly fierce in the autumn of 1927. They openly resorted to counter-revolutionary actions, and openly began to advocate the creation a party of would-be restorers of capitalism and to set about creating such a party; they resorted to every form of slander and provocation, and conspired with the espionage services of capitalist states and began to pave the way for imperialist intervention.

After hearing Stalin's report, the Fifteenth Party Congress declared that the Trotskyite opposition had "broken with Leninism," degenerated into a Menshevik group, had adopted the path of capitulation to the international and internal bourgeoisie, and had in fact become an instrument of a third force hostile to the regime of the proletarian dictatorship.

Following on Stalin's report, the Fifteenth Congress expelled these enemies of the Party from its ranks and adopted the course of the further industrialization of the country and the collectivization of agriculture, of a vigorous offensive against the kulaks and the elimination of all capitalist elements. The First Five-Year National Economic Plan was drawn up on the basis of the decisions of the Fifteenth Party Congress. It was the first Stalinist Five-Year Plan of the socialist offensive.

At this moment, when the Trotskyites had been expelled from the Party, the Right would-be restorers of capitalism now appeared on the scene—Rykov, Bukharin, Tomsky and others—who had formerly tried to conceal their disagreement with the Party and even pretended to combat the Trotskyites. The Right danger began to grow into the main danger, and the heaviest fire had to be directed against it. This struggle against the Right would-be restorers of capitalism was also directed by Stalin. He took up the cudgels against the Rights in May, 1928, in a lecture addressed to the students of the Institute of Red Professors, the Communist Academy and the Sverdlov University. He pointed out that to retard the development of heavy industry would be suicidal, that "it would mean

abandoning the slogan of industrializing our country, transforming our country into an appendage of the capitalist economic system." (*Leninism.*)

On October 19, 1928, Stalin spoke at a plenary meeting of the Moscow Committee and the Moscow Control Commission of the Party on the Right danger in the C.P.S.U. (B.). He warned that the Rights were making for an alliance with the kulak elements and called for a determined struggle against the Right danger:

"In order," he said, "to overcome the difficulties we must first defeat the Right danger, we must first overcome the Right deviation which is hindering the fight against the difficulties and is trying to shake the Party's will to fight to overcome the difficulties." (*Ibid.*)

And again, as at the time when the struggle of the Trotskyites against the Party had become acute, the action of the Right would-be restorers of capitalism inspired all the enemies of the Soviet Government and the Bolshevik Party. During this period the trial of the notorious group of wreckers in the Shakhty district took place. Under the direction of international financiers and Russian capitalists, who had fled the country, a group of experts of former days, who had remained working in the U.S.S.R., were formed into an organization for sabotage and counter-revolution.

Reporting on the work of the Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission at a meeting of the Moscow Party organization, Stalin pointed out that the Shakhty trial signified a new and serious attack on the Soviet regime by international capital and its agents within our country; that it signified economic intervention in our internal affairs.

Many of the technical experts of the old order, who had not fled the country, were bitterly hostile to the regime, as was clearly shown by the Shakhty trial. Stalin saw at once the necessity for creating new working-class technicians and brain workers of all kinds, whose loyalty to the revolution could be relied on implicitly. In this way he taught the Party to draw practical lessons from difficulties as they arose, and to overcome them.

In his speech at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party in April, 1929, on the Right deviation in the C.P.S.U.(B.), Stalin spoke of the great importance of the Party's slogan of self-criticism.

"We cannot," he said, "improve our business, trade union and Party organizations, we cannot advance the cause of building Socialism and of curbing the wrecking activities of the bourgeoisie, unless we develop criticism and self-criticism to the utmost, unless we place the work of

our organizations under the control of the masses." (*Ibid.*) Stalin showed what a direct and immediate significance the slogan of self-criticism had in the fulfilment of the highly important measures outlined by the Party: the utmost development of collective farming and state farming; the offensive against the kulaks; organization of the grain collections; improvement of the work of the Party and business organizations; the struggle against bureaucracy in the trade unions and the Soviet apparatus; the purging of the Party's ranks of non-Bolshevik elements. He showed that the reconstruction of the national economy on the basis of Socialism represented "the offensive of Socialism against the capitalist elements of national economy along the whole front. It is a most important advance of the working class of our country towards the building of Socialism." (*Ibid.*)

We can now see clearly that it was thanks to the fact that the Party, under the leadership of Stalin, was able to vanquish both Trotskyism and Right opportunism and resolutely take the course marked out by Lenin and Stalin that the Soviet country was able to develop socialist construction, construction on a scale without parallel in the world.

"History had never known industrial construction on such a gigantic scale, such enthusiasm for new development, such labour heroism on the part of the working-class millions." ("History of the C.P.S.U.[B.]")

It was just this victory in the industrialization of the country and the first important steps in the collectivization of agriculture that ensured the mass movement of the peasants towards collectivization and Socialism.

When an example had to be shown of how to fight for this mass movement, Stalin personally visited districts where this fight was badly organized or presented unusual difficulties. Thus in the winter of 1928 he visited Siberia—Barnaul and other parts of the Altai Territory—summoning meetings of active Party workers and discussing with them plans for the socialist offensive.

On the occasion of the Twelfth Anniversary of the Soviet regime, Stalin published an article entitled "A Year of Great Change." The change, he said, was expressed in "a determined offensive of Socialism against the capitalist elements in town and country" (*Leninism*). The change was proceeding in the sphere of the productivity of labour, without which the final victory of Socialism over capitalism would be inconceivable. It was also proceeding in the sphere of industrial construction, in which connection Stalin declared that "the problem of building heavy indus-

try cannot be regarded as fully solved until we have solved the problem of cadres." (*Ibid.*)

No less important was the change in agriculture. The middle peasant was flocking into the collective farms. "That," said Stalin, "is the basis of that radical change in the development of agriculture which represents the most important achievement of the Soviet government during the past year." (*Ibid.*)

Summing up these gratifying results, Stalin drew a conclusion which inspired the Party and the working people generally to new feats of heroism and filled them with confidence in final victory.

"We are advancing full steam ahead along the path of industrialization—to Socialism, leaving behind the age-long 'Russian' backwardness. We are becoming a country of metal, a country of automobiles, a country of tractors. And when we have put the U.S.S.R. on an automobile, and the muzhik on a tractor, let the esteemed capitalists, who boast so loudly of their 'civilization,' try to overtake us! We shall see which countries may then be 'classified' as backward and which as advanced." (*Ibid.*)

## CHAPTER XI

### THE COLLECTIVIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

No historian can fail to pay attention to the profound revolution in agriculture represented by the mass movement for collectivization. In this respect the year 1929, the year of great change, was of tremendous importance. The success of collectivization had been ensured in the first place by the correct policy of the working class toward the peasantry, the policy pursued by the Party under Stalin's guidance. He fought both the Right would-be restorers of capitalism, the opponents of collectivization, and the "Left" distorters of the Party policy, who endeavoured to secure by administrative coercion what could only be done by prolonged propaganda, explanation and convincing arguments, thus repulsing the peasants and placing a weapon in the hands of the enemy. The success of collectivization was also due to the industrialization of the country, which placed vast technical resources in the hands of the Soviet State with which to help and facilitate this movement.

Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific Socialism, were not in a position to form a concrete idea of how the transition to collectivization in agriculture would take place. In one of the rough drafts of a letter written to Vera Zassulich in March, 1881, Marx expressed the idea that Russia was a country which had even been endowed by nature with conditions which, given a socialist revolution, would favour socialized machine cultivation of the soil. He was of the opinion that the technical equipment required for collective machine agriculture could be obtained by Russia ready-made from the capitalist system.

We know how Lenin dreamed of a hundred thousand tractors and tractor drivers for agriculture, and what tremendous significance he attached to collective farming.

Under Stalin's leadership, Lenin's dream has been realized. He paid unfailing attention to the building of large tractor plants and other complex agricultural machinery works. He personally went into all the details of this important matter, himself attending the tests of new machines, giving instructions to designers, factory mana-

gers and inventors as to what improvements in machines were required, what new machines to build and how. Thanks to this, all kinds of labour-saving machinery are now widely employed in the agriculture of the Soviet state, such as tractors, harvester combines, potato planters, cultivators, flax, sugar beet and cotton harvesting machines, etc.

What made the collectivization of agriculture possible was the fact that Stalin always acted through the advanced people of our country and through the masses. He taught us that victory never comes of its own accord, that it has to be fought for, and secured by proper and persistent organization of labour, by proper leadership.

It cannot be said that collectivization proceeded smoothly, without let or hindrance. It is enough to mention that the collectivization of our agriculture, and the fulfilment of the first five-year plan in agriculture, generally, took place at a time when capitalism was passing through a world crisis, when the capitalists dreamt—and here and there attempted—to improve their affairs at the expense of the Soviet Union, and when the danger of war became more acute than ever. In 1931 the Japanese imperialists seized Manchuria and set up the semblance of a new government—Manchukuo—but in reality created a base for an eventual attack on the Soviet Union.

At home, those contemptible enemies, the Trotskyites and Right would-be restorers of capitalism, conspired with the imperialists and their espionage services, engineered acts of diversion, engaged in espionage and gathered information for the benefit of foreign powers, plotted the assassination of some of the Party's best members, succeeded in assassinating Sergei Kirov, and conspired against the lives of the leaders of the Party and the Government. But the full force of their hatred was directed against Stalin, the personification of the iron will, the conscience, the brain and the inexhaustible energy of the people.

It was in these circumstances that Stalin, guiding the whole work of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party and the work of all the organs of the Soviet Government, put into effect the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class on the basis of solid collectivization. This was a measure of cardinal importance, and it ensured the final victory of the collective farm system. Step by step, Stalin prepared the way for this profound revolution in agriculture.

On December 27, 1929, addressing a conference of Marxist agrarian students, Stalin showed how deep were the changes that had taken place in Russia since the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. There were only

two alternatives, he said: "Either back—to capitalism, or forward—to Socialism. There is no third way, nor can there be." He exposed the serious harm of the opportunist theories preached by the Bukharinites—the theory of "equilibrium" between agriculture and industry, the theory of "spontaneity" in socialist development, and the like.

It was necessary for the Party at various times to pay increased attention to one or another branch of industry and secure its improvement both as regards quantity and quality. The Bolshevik Party did not expect the collectivization of agriculture to happen of its own accord. "The Socialist towns," Stalin taught us, "must lead the countryside, in which small peasant farming predominates, set up collective farms and state farms in the rural district and reorganize the rural districts on a new, socialist basis." (*Leninism*.)

He exposed the petty-bourgeois theory of the "stability" of small peasant farming. He pointed out that as a result of the development of collective farming, a profound change had taken place in the economic life of the country, a re-grouping of class forces. The kulak no longer held the economic position in grain and livestock production which he had enjoyed before. We have, Stalin said, "the material base which enables us to substitute for kulak output the output of the collective farms and state farms . . . That is why we have recently passed from the policy of restricting the exploiting proclivities of the kulaks to the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class." (*Ibid.*)

It should be stated that when the Central Committee issued the slogan for a more vigorous offensive against the kulaks and the transition to solid collectivization in a number of districts, there were not a few "Left" distorters of the Party line who decided that explanatory work was superfluous and began to introduce collectivization in districts where the conditions for it were absolutely unripe. They began to dispossess, "dekulakize," people wholesale, people who often were not kulaks at all. This was very dangerous, all the more since the direct enemies of the Soviet system and the Bolshevik Party took advantage of this and hoped by means of such distortions of policy to rouse the resentment of the peasants against the Soviet government and to make them revolt against collectivization.

Stalin attacked these dangerous distortions in his article "Dizzy With Success" (included in *Leninism*, English edition). The effect of this article was tremendous. It helped to correct the mistakes which had been made and ensured a genuine turn towards Socialism in the country-

side. In this article, he declared that the chief form of collective farming in the first stage of its development should be the agricultural artel.\* not the agricultural commune,\* the conditions for which were not yet ripe.

In this article Stalin gave a splendid lesson in leadership. "The art of leadership," he wrote, "is a serious matter. One must not lag behind the movement, because to do so is to become isolated from the masses. But one must not rush ahead, for to rush ahead is to lose contact with the masses. He who wants to lead a movement and at the same time keep in touch with the vast masses must wage a fight on two fronts—against those who lag behind and against those who rush on ahead.

"Our Party is strong and invincible because, while leading the movement, it knows how to maintain and multiply its contacts with the vast masses of the workers and peasants." (*Ibid.*)

On March 15, 1930, following this article, the Central Committee of the Party, on Stalin's recommendation, published its resolution "On Combating Distortions of the Party Line in the Collective Farm Movement." This resolution, like Stalin's article, "Dizzy With Success," was of the utmost value in correcting the mistakes and distortions of policy in the countryside.

When, after this, Stalin began to receive letters from peasants and collective farmers from all parts of the country raising a number of questions relating to collectivization, he replied in an article entitled "A Reply to Collective Farm Comrades" (included in *Leninism*), published on April 3, 1930. In this article he indicated the principal mistakes committed by many Party and Soviet functionaries in regard to the collective farm movement. The root of these mistakes was the failure to understand the importance of the middle peasant, a wrong attitude towards him, and a forgetfulness of Lenin's maxim that the peasants must not be forced to join the collective farms. The collective farms had to be based on the voluntary principle; the different conditions prevailing in the various districts of the Soviet Union had to be taken into account; the artel form of collective farming must not be skipped nor the commune introduced at once. The commune must be the *culmination* of collectivization; it would be possible only when there is an abundance of products to satisfy all the needs of the members of the commune.

The Party's well-thought-out measures complied with

\* COMMUNE AND ARTEL. In the artel the principal means of production are socialized, but household land (small vegetable gardens, small orchards), dwellings, a certain part of the dairy cattle, small livestock, poultry, etc., are not socialized. In the commune, not only all production but all distribution is also socialized.

Stalin's advice and instructions and ensured the success of solid collectivization, and created the conditions for the elimination of the kulaks as a class.

In the "History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)," Stalin defines this swing towards collectivization as "a profound revolution, a leap from an old qualitative state of society to a new qualitative state, equivalent in its consequences to the revolution of October, 1917.

"The distinguishing feature of this revolution is that it was accomplished *from above*, on the initiative of the state, and directly supported *from below*, by the millions of peasants, who were fighting to throw off kulak bondage and to live in freedom in the collective farms." ("History of the C.P.S.U.[B.]")

In February, 1930, in fulfilment of the wish expressed at meetings of workers, peasants, Red Army men and a number of organizations, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. awarded Stalin a second Order of the Red Banner for his outstanding services in the sphere of socialist construction.

On June 26, 1930, the Sixteenth Party Congress met, which Stalin has called the congress "of the sweeping offensive of Socialism along the whole front, of the elimination of the kulaks as a class, and of the realization of solid collectivization."

At this Congress Stalin made a lengthy report in which he reviewed the vast work performed in the socialist reconstruction of the whole country. This Congress revealed an unprecedented unanimity in the Party; the Trotskyites and Rights had been utterly defeated.

The Congress adopted a decision to support the slogan to complete the First Five-Year Plan in four years, a slogan which had originated among the masses themselves. The completion of the First Five-Year Plan in four years, and the subsequent adoption and fulfilment of the Second-Five Year Plan, were a result of Stalin's wise leadership.

Stalin attentively follows all phases of the activities of the Party, Soviet, trade union, co-operative and other organizations. He carefully studies all processes of economic, administrative, military and cultural activity, and is always prompt to pick out the main questions on which the attention of the Party and of the working people should be centred. He has the faculty of detecting the important link in the chain at any particular moment, the link that furnishes the key to the whole problem.

For example, at the First All-Union Conference of Managers of Socialist Industry held on February 4, 1931, he delivered an address on "The Tasks of Business Managers," in which he drew attention to the necessity

of mastering technique. He said: "We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or they crush us." (*Leninism.*)

But it was in the sphere of technique that we were lagging most of all. It is worthy of note that Stalin associated the necessity of making good this lag with our international duties and our international tasks. He said that we had international duties of the highest order. What were they? "The working class of the U.S.S.R.," he said, "is part of the world working class. We achieved victory not only as a result of the efforts of the working class of the U.S.S.R. but also thanks to the support of the working class of the world. Without this support we would have been torn to pieces long ago. It is said that our country is the shock-brigade of the proletariat of all countries. This is well said. But this imposes very serious obligations upon us. Why does the international proletariat support us? How did we merit this support? By the fact that we were the first to hurl ourselves into the battle against capitalism, we were the first to establish a working-class state, we were the first to start building Socialism. By the fact that we are doing that which, if successful, will change the whole world and free the entire working class. But what is needed for success? The elimination of our backwardness, the development of a high Bolshevik tempo of construction. We must march forward in such a way that the working class of the whole world, looking at us, may say: 'This is my vanguard, this is my shock-brigade, this is my working-class state, this is my fatherland; they are promoting their cause, which is our cause, and they are doing this well; let us support them against the capitalists and spread the cause of the world revolution.'"  
("Ibid.)

That the Soviet people have not only mastered technique, but are perfecting it as compared with capitalist technique and demonstrating the superiority of the Soviet economic system, is a fact of great significance from the standpoint of these international obligations.

To those who talked of the difficulties of this task, Stalin replied: "There are no fortresses which Bolsheviks cannot capture. We have solved a number of most difficult problems. We have overthrown capitalism. We have assumed power. We have built up a huge socialist industry. We have turned the middle peasants to the path of Socialism. We have already accomplished what is most important from the point of view of construction. What remains to be done is not so much: to study technique, to master science. And when we have done this we will deve-

lop a tempo of which we dare not even dream at present. And we can do this if we really want to." (*Ibid.*)

In June, 1931, Stalin addressed a meeting of business managers on "New Conditions—New Economic Tasks" (included in *Leninism*, English Edition), in which he enumerated six conditions necessary to ensure the proper speed and quality of development of our industry. These conditions were: (1) to recruit labour power in an organized way by concluding contracts with the collective farms, and to ease the labour of the new workers by mechanization; (2) to put an end to the heavy turnover of labour power, to do away with wage equalization, to organize wages properly and to improve the living conditions of the workers; (3) to put an end to the lack of personal responsibility in and to improve the organization of labour, and to secure the proper distribution of forces in our enterprises; (4) to see to it that the working class of the U.S.S.R. has its own industrial and technical intelligentsia; (5) to change the attitude towards the engineers and technicians of the old school, to show them greater attention and solicitude and display more boldness in enlisting their co-operation; (6) to introduce and reinforce business accounting, to increase the accumulation of capital within industry itself. The new conditions, the new tasks, demanded new methods of work, new methods of management. And that meant studying the conditions of development of industry, directing concretely, not "in general." Managers must direct in a business-like way, study the technique of their business, go into all the minute details, "for it is out of 'minute' details that great things are now being built." Red tape methods must be abandoned. The people working in factories and institutions must be studied. Not only must we study them, but we must learn from the masses and maintain live contact with them. The most important thing, Comrade Stalin teaches us, is living people. "What makes our plan real is the living people, it is you and I, our will to work, our readiness to work in the new way, our determination to carry out the plan. Have we that determination? We have. Well then, our production plan can and must be carried out." (*Ibid.*)

The Land of the Soviets might now be said to have entered the period of Socialism, firmly based on the successes achieved in large-scale industry and collectivized agriculture. "It is clear," said Stalin at the Sixteenth Party Congress, "that we have already emerged from the transition period, in the old meaning of the term, and have entered the period of direct and extended socialist construction along the whole front. It is clear that we have already entered the period of Socialism, for the socialist sector now

controls all the economic levers of the entire national economy." (*Ibid.*)

About this time the magazine "Proletarskaya Revolutsiya" published for discussion, an anti-Party semi-Trotskyist article entitled "The Bolsheviks' Opinion of the German Social-Democratic Party During its Pre-War Crisis." Such an article could only have been published through the decadent liberalism of a number of Party historians. Stalin wrote a letter in answer to this article on "Some Questions Concerning the History of Bolshevism" (included in *Leninism*, English Edition), in which he struck sternly at the distorters of history, at the attempts to smuggle Trotskyist and semi-Trotskyist ideas into historical writing. In this letter he called upon the historians "to raise the questions concerning the history of Bolshevism to the proper level, to put the study of the history of our Party on scientific, Bolshevik lines, and to concentrate attention against the Trotskyite and all other falsifiers of the history of our Party by systematically tearing off their masks."

As we know, not only did Stalin issue this call to historians, but himself acted up to it by compiling the "History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)," which is a splendid example of the Bolshevik conception and the Bolshevik treatment of the history of the Party. This letter had an immense effect not only in improving the work of the historians, but in improving the work in all departments of Marxist theory.

Since this letter was written remarks have appeared by Stalin, Kirov and Zhdanov on the plans for text-books, a letter to the writers of a text-book on the history of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and other documents by Stalin, as well as the "History of the Civil War," which he helped to compile and edit—all of which are indications of the immense value of his theoretical work.

Stalin is an example of a statesman who supports bold innovators in science, "that science which does not fence itself off from the people and does not hold aloof from them, but which is prepared to serve the people and to transmit to them all the benefits of science, and which does not serve the people under compulsion, but voluntarily and willingly."

He has given weighty support to innovators in the field of science like Tsiolkovsky, Pavlov, Tsitsin, Lyssenko and other outstanding scientists. On his advice, the Communist Academy was merged with the Academy of Sciences in order to bring the latter body into closer touch with the problems of socialist construction. He takes a deep interest in literature and art, and it is thanks to the solici-

tude shown by the Party and Soviet Government for scientists and artists in all the republics and regions of the U.S.S.R. that we have that flourishing state of culture seen in our country to-day, a culture national in form and socialist in content. In all this work, Stalin proved himself an exemplary leader and organizer of socialist science and socialist culture.

At the Seventeenth Party Conference, held at the beginning of 1932, the directions for the compilation of the Second Five-Year National Economic Plan of the U.S.S.R. was drawn up under Stalin's direction.

The Conference recorded that "the Soviet Union, from a country of small and minute agriculture, has become a country with the largest-scale agriculture in the world, based on collectivization, the development of state farming and the broad application of machine technique," and that the U.S.S.R. had "created its own base for the completion of the reconstruction of the entire national economy." The Conference gave instructions for the compilation of the Second Five-Year Plan, the principal aim of which was to be the complete elimination of capitalist elements and the completion of the reconstruction of the entire national economy, and the creation of an up-to-date technical basis for all branches of the national economy.

The second Five-Year Plan, like the First, was drawn up under Stalin's guidance and constituted a programme for a new and gigantic constructive advance of the U.S.S.R.

In January, 1933, at a Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Stalin delivered a report on the results of the First Five-Year Plan. He declared that the cardinal conclusion to be drawn from the First Five-Year Plan was that the building of a socialist society in one country was fully possible, and that the economic foundation of such a society had already been laid in the U.S.S.R. Socialist industry by that time already constituted 70 per cent of the entire national economy. The socialist economic system had become the sole system in industry. In agriculture, the collective farm system had been definitely consolidated. The triumph of Socialism in all branches of the national economy had put an end to the exploitation of man by man. Stalin pointed to the tremendous international significance of the First Five-Year Plan, for "the successes of the Five-Year Plan are mobilizing the revolutionary forces of the working class of all countries against capitalism." (*Ibid.*)

On January 11, 1933, Stalin spoke at a joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on work in the rural districts, in

which he pointed out that "the collective farm is a socialist form of *economic organization*, just as the Soviets are a socialist form of *political organization*." (*Ibid.*) But the important thing was the content that was to be put into this form. It was the task of the Party to make all the collective farms Bolshevik.

In February, 1933, on Stalin's initiative and under his guidance, the First All-Union Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers was held. This Congress summed up the first results of the collective-farm movement, and answered the question—was the path taken by the collective farm peasants, the path of collective farming, the right one?

In his cogent and convincing speech, which is a model of propagandist skill in explaining the most intricate questions to the masses, Stalin showed that collective farming was the only right path, for the only other way was the restoration of capitalism, a retrograde, downward movement towards the old, kulak, capitalist system.

Another question raised by Stalin was—what had we achieved by the new system of collective farming and what did we hope to achieve in the next two or three years? "An achievement of ours," he said, "is that we have helped millions of poor peasants to join the collective farms. It is an achievement of ours that by joining the collective farms, where they have at their disposal the best land and the finest implements of production, millions of poor peasants have risen to the level of middle peasants. It is an achievement of ours that millions of poor peasants, who formerly lived in penury, have now, in the collective farms, become middle peasants, have attained material security." (*Ibid.*) But that was only the first step, he said. "We must now take another step forward, and help all the collective farmers—both the former poor peasants and the former middle peasants—to rise to the level of prosperous peasants." (*Ibid.*)

Thus, the task Stalin set of making the collective farms Bolshevik, was supplemented by another task, that of making the collective farmers prosperous.

Stalin's speech at this Congress was of the utmost significance. In particular, it dissipated the prejudices entertained by a section of the peasant women against the collective farms, and it undermined and demolished the agitation of the kulaks. It helped to correct many mistakes and shortcomings in the collective-farm movement and still further to consolidate the collective farm system in the country.

In January, 1934, the Seventeenth Party Congress met. It is known in history as "The Congress of the Victors." Stalin's report at this Congress was a paean to the triumph

of Communism. This Congress heard the speech of Sergei Kirov, full of fire and confidence in victory. This was his last speech at a Party Congress.

In his speech, Stalin drew a vivid picture of the profound changes that had taken place in the U.S.S.R., altering the face of the land and converting the country from an agrarian to an industrial country, from a country of small individual farming into a country of collective, large-scale, mechanized farming, from a country of ignorance, illiteracy and unenlightenment, to a literate and enlightened country covered with a dense network of elementary, secondary and higher educational establishments, where instruction is given in the languages of the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. By that time socialist industry embraced 99 per cent of the industry of the country, while socialist agriculture—the collective farms and state farms—embraced about 90 per cent of the crop area.

The Second Five-Year Plan of socialist reconstruction of the national economy was already in operation. The country was marching forward to great new socialist advances. It was marching forward confidently, for it had accumulated vast experience in constructive work. It was headed by the man beloved of the people, the wise leader of the Party, Stalin. He it was who indicated the most important organizational tasks of the Party. He demanded a higher theoretical level of its members, more intense work in all its sections, the constant propaganda of Leninism, and the training of the Party members in the spirit of Leninist internationalism. He pointed to the necessity of heightened revolutionary vigilance.

He demanded bold and ruthless criticism of all deviations from Marxism-Leninism, the systematic exposure of theoretical trends hostile to Leninism. He laid the following cardinal organizational tasks before the Party:

- “1. To continue to adapt our organizational work to the requirements of the political line of the Party;
- “2. To raise organizational leadership to the level of political leadership;
- “3. To see to it that organizational leadership is fully equal to the task of ensuring the realization of the political slogans and decisions of the Party.” (*Ibid.*)

Stalin pointed to the tremendous importance of the Political Departments in the machine and tractor stations and on the state farms, to the necessity of improving their work, and generally of bringing Party and Soviet leadership closer to the countryside. At the same time, he proposed a number of major organizational measures, such as the division into smaller units of the People's Commissa-

riats, the administrative regions and districts, and the industrial boards and trusts.

The purpose of all these measures was to make leadership more responsible and concrete, to bring it closer to the masses, and to improve the entire work of the Party, state and economic bodies.

It should be borne in mind that not only is every utterance of Stalin's a great event in the Soviet country, but that it also meets with a wide response all over the world. His speeches and articles are printed by the press in all countries. The whole world listens attentively to his words. He is sparing of speech; he comes out publicly only when it is in the interests of the Party, of the people, of the Soviet state. From time to time, he is approached on various questions by citizens of foreign countries. Thus, on January 4, 1934, he gave an interview to Walter Duranty, the American newspaper correspondent, on July 23, 1934, to H. G. Wells, and on March 1, 1936, to Roy Howard, representative of the Scripps-Howard Newspapers. These interviews were of the highest value in explaining to the broad masses of the working people the views of the Bolshevik Party on various questions concerning international affairs and the relations between the U.S.S.R. and other countries.

On December 1, 1934, a treacherous shot fired by a Trotskyite bandit put an end of the life of Sergei Kirov, a close friend of Stalin's, a fine Bolshevik, an ardent spokesman of the revolution and a loyal son of the people. This murder showed that, having lost every basis of support, the enemies of Communism, the enemies of our Party, were capable of the most infamous deeds, the most nefarious crimes, and had degenerated into a gang of hired assassins, diversionists, spies and wreckers.

Stalin had frequently warned the Party that the struggle might become so acute that the enemy would baulk at nothing.

He taught and teaches the Party to be always vigilant, to expose the artful masks of the enemy, who sometimes manages to worm his way on to leading posts in industry and in Party and Young Communist League bodies. He teaches us to be ruthless in exterminating the roots of the Trotskyite and other hostile organizations.

The assassination of Kirov by the Trotskyite bandits showed how essential it was to wage a resolute struggle against the remnants of the anti-Leninist groups of every kind. Had it not waged this ruthless struggle and demolished the hostile elements, the Soviet country could not have achieved the tremendous successes it has in the struggle for Communism.

Under Stalin's leadership the Bolshevik Party in this

period performed a historic task, which for its difficulty was second only to the conquest of power. Millions of small peasant owners had definitely taken the path of Socialism, the path of collective farming. The largest of all the exploiting classes—the kulaks—had been eliminated, and the last roots of capitalism in the country destroyed. Thus the victory of Socialism had been ensured, the exploitation of man by man abolished, and the conditions created for a continuous improvement of the material and cultural standards of the working people of our country. This victory was achieved by the Bolshevik Party, led by its trusty leader Stalin.

## CHAPTER XII

### ACTIVITIES AFTER THE SEVENTEENTH PARTY CONGRESS

(1935-1939)

Such is the value set by the Bolshevik Party on Stalin's recommendations, that no resolution was passed on his report at the Seventeenth Party Congress but the report itself was adopted in its entirety as the basis for the Party's further activities. Reviewing the path already traversed and the successes achieved in the work of socialist construction, he drew three major conclusions:

1. "We must not be carried away by the successes achieved and not get swelled head." 2. "We must remain thoroughly loyal to the great teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin." 3. "We must remain thoroughly loyal to proletarian internationalism, to the fraternal alliance of the proletarians of all countries." (*Leninism.*)

What were the distinguishing features of this new period in the development of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.? The Second Five-Year National Economic Plan had been fulfilled ahead of time and the work on the Third Five-Year Plan of socialist construction had already begun. In the main, the building of a socialist society had been completed. Immense achievements were to be recorded in the training of cadres, in their technical and theoretical education. Of vast importance in this period was the development of the Stakhanov movement. The bands of Right, Trotskyite and nationalist agents of foreign espionage services, the would-be restorers of capitalism, had been demolished. Order had been introduced in Party affairs. The Stalin Constitution had been drawn up and put into operation. The process of completing the building of Socialism and gradually passing from the first stage of Socialism to its higher stage—Communism—was now in progress.

In the fulfilment of these gigantic tasks, Stalin's guidance was of the utmost value. Every new step in the development of the movement towards Communism was associated with his initiative, with his theoretical contributions and practical indications.

Take, for example, the question of cadres. In his address to the graduates from the Red Army Academies on May 4, 1935, in the Kremlin, Stalin showed how, led by the Party, the Soviet country had conducted the offensive against the capitalist elements and had achieved an outstanding victory in this respect. It was able to achieve this victory because it had swept from its path all those who called for a reduction of the speed of socialist construction adopted by the Party, or for any deviation from the Party line.

"We chose," Comrade Stalin said, "the plan of advance and moved forward along the Leninist road, brushing aside . . . people who could see more or less what was under their noses, but who closed their eyes to the immediate future of our country, to the future of Socialism in our country." (*Leninism*.)

However, these enemies of Bolshevism did not confine themselves to criticizing the policy of the Party. "They threatened to raise a revolt in the Party against the Central Committee. More, they threatened some of us with bullets. Evidently, they reckoned on frightening us and compelling us to turn from the Leninist road. These people, apparently, forgot that we Bolsheviks are people of a special cut. They forgot that neither difficulties nor threats can frighten Bolsheviks. They forgot that we had been trained and steeled by the great Lenin, our leader, our teacher, our father, who knew and recognized no fear in the fight. They forgot that the more the enemies rage and the more hysterical the foes within the Party become, the more ardent are the Bolsheviks for fresh struggles and the more vigorously they push forward.

"Of course, it never even occurred to us to turn from the Leninist road. Moreover, once we stood firmly on this road, we pushed forward still more vigorously, brushing every obstacle from our path." (*Ibid.*)

In this speech, Comrade Stalin raised the question of cadres in all its urgency. In the preceding period, he said, when the task was to create a new technique and to spread it far and wide, emphasis was laid on the slogan "technique decides everything." But when this technique had been created, it was at once felt that "we need people who have mastered technique, we need cadres capable of mastering and utilizing this technique according to all the rules of the art. Without people who have mastered technique, technique is dead. In the charge of people who have mastered technique, technique can and should perform miracles. . . That is why emphasis must now be laid on people, on cadres, on workers who have mastered technique. That is why the old slogan, 'Technique decides every-

thing,' which is a reflection of a period already passed, a period in which we suffered from a dearth in technique, must now be replaced by a new slogan, the slogan 'Cadres decide everything.' That is the main thing now." (*Ibid.*)

Acting on Stalin's recommendations, the Party and the Government set about training on a wider scale than ever cadres of Soviet, socialist intellectuals in all branches of knowledge, and did so with great success.

Stalin's words have become a law to the Party, so high is his prestige in the Party and in the entire country. This is because he ponders over every step with the utmost care, weighs every circumstance, makes skilful use of the teachings of dialectical materialism, which make it possible to foresee the development of events a long way ahead. But, in order to carry out the slogans of the Party, he always turns first and foremost to the masses, appeals to their enlightenment and organization, and calls for their aid. The congresses of collective farmers and a number of conferences with representatives of the foremost people in various branches of economic endeavour were summoned on his advice. He personally attended these conferences, guided them, took a keen interest in the speeches of the collective farmers, Stakhanovites, steel-smelters, builders, cotton-growers, etc., and on each occasion suggested new ideas to the masses, and thus helped to accelerate the movement forward to the victory of Socialism.

Thus, on July 30, 1935, a reception was given in the Kremlin to railway workers at which Stalin spoke on the tasks of the railways. On November 10, 1935, the leaders of the Party and the Government gave a reception in the Kremlin to women collective farm shock workers in sugar-beet growing. In the middle of November, 1935, the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites of Industry and Transport was held in the Kremlin. On December 1 of the same year, a conference of members of the Central Committee of the Party and of the Government with foremost combine operators took place in the conference hall of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.). On December 4 a conference of leaders of the Party and the Government with leading collective farmers of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan was held in the Kremlin. About this time, too, conferences of foremost collective farmers of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kara-Kalpakia were held. Towards the end of December a conference was called of leaders of the Party and the Government with record grain crop growers and foremost tractor drivers and threshing machine operators. In January, 1936, there was a conference of the leaders of the Party and the Government with foremost workers in the machine and tractor stations and in the

land departments. On January 4, 1936, a reception was given by leaders of the Party and the Government in the Kremlin to workers in the gold, non-ferrous, light and rare metals industries. On January 27, 1936, leaders of the Party and the Government gave a reception to delegates from the working people of the Buryat-Mongolian A.S.S.R. (Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic). On March 14, 1936, a conference was held of leaders of the Party and the Government with foremost collective farmers from the flax and hemp regions. On March 19, 1936, in connection with the fifteenth anniversary of the foundation of the Georgian Soviet Republic, a reception was given to delegates from that republic. And on May 10, 1936, an all-Union conference of wives of managers and engineers in heavy industry opened in the Kremlin.

This is only part of the numerous conferences of foremost workers in various branches of industry and culture. These conferences were addressed by Stalin, and his utterances were of the highest value for the economic development of the country, for the realization of the decisions of the Party and the Government, for strengthening the ties between the Party and the masses, and for consolidating the friendship among the nations of the U.S.S.R.

Thus, for example, during the period of acute struggle for the collectivization of agriculture, the kulaks and priests did their utmost to influence the peasants and to frighten them with absurd stories about life in the collective farms. Stalin demolished this propaganda of the kulaks in his speech at a congress of collective farmers.

Speaking at a reception given to women shock workers from the beet-growing collective farms in November, 1935, he pointed out that it was solely thanks to the collective farms that women in the rural districts had been able to become the equal of men in labour.

"Woman in the countryside," he said, "was the lowest of toilers. Naturally, no heroines of labour could arise among the peasant women under such conditions. Labour in those days was a curse to a woman, and she would avoid it as much as she could.

"Only the collective farm life could have made labour a thing of honour, it alone could have bred genuine heroines in the countryside. Only the collective farm life could have destroyed inequality and put woman on her feet. That you know very well yourselves. The collective farm introduced the work-day unit. And what is the work-day unit? Before the work-day units all are equal—men and women. He who has most work-day units to his credit earns most. Here neither father nor husband can reproach a woman with the fact that he is feeding her. Now

if a woman works and has work-day units to her credit, she is her own master."

At the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites on November 17, 1935, Stalin brought out the profound significance of the Stakhanov movement. He said that this movement "is the expression of a new wave of Socialist emulation, a new and higher stage of Socialist emulation." (*Leninism*).

"The Stakhanov movement is a movement of working men and women which sets itself the aim of surpassing the present technical standards, surpassing the existing designed capacities, surpassing the existing production plans and estimates. . . . This movement is breaking down the old views of technique, it is shattering the old technical standards, the old designed capacities, and the old production plans, and demands the creation of new and higher technical standards, designed capacities, and production plans. It is destined to produce a revolution in our industry. That is why the Stakhanov movement is at bottom a profoundly revolutionary movement. . . .

"But the significance of the Stakhanov movement does not end there. Its significance lies also in the fact that it is preparing the conditions for the transition from Socialism to Communism." (*Ibid.*)

Communism represents a higher stage of development of Socialism, and it demands a higher level of productivity of labour. It also demands a higher level of culture and technique, and presupposes the elimination of the difference between mental and manual labour. It will raise the productivity of labour to such a level as to ensure an abundance of articles of consumption, and will make it possible to distribute them in conformity to the needs of the members of the Communist society. The Stakhanov movement has itself sprung from a higher technique, from the relatively high material and cultural level already achieved, and, in its turn, it furnishes an impulse to the development of productivity of labour, to a rising cultural and technical level of the workers and a rising level of material well-being of the working people. The Party pursued an attitude towards the Stakhanovites which thoroughly undermined wage equalization and undefined responsibility, and ensured the Stakhanovites a high remuneration for their labour.

Stalin showed that the roots of the Stakhanov movement lay in the improvement of the material conditions of the workers. "Life has improved, comrades. Life has become more joyous. And when life is joyous, work goes well. Hence the high rates of output. Hence the heroes and heroines of labour. That, primarily, is the root of the Stakhanov movement." (*Ibid.*)

A second source of the Stakhanov movement was the absence of exploitation. A third source was that we now had a modern technique. A fourth source was that we already had first-class cadres capable of mastering the first-class technique. New people had come to the fore, people who were establishing new standards of labour output and breaking down the old standards. "New people, new times—new technical standards." (*Ibid.*)

At a conference of foremost men and women harvester combine operators, Stalin defined a task which was huge but quite possible of achievement in the early future in view of the available modern technique, new people and new methods of labour. This task was to achieve an annual grain crop of seven or eight thousand and million poods in the next few years.

The international situation in which the struggle for the completion of the building of Socialist society in the U.S.S.R. was taking place at this period was unfavourable and tense in the extreme. The capitalist countries had been plunged into a new crisis, and many imperialist governments were seeking for a way out of it in a new re-division of the world. The capitalist world was imperceptibly slipping into a new war embracing vast territories.

Such a state of affairs demanded immense restraint, wisdom and flexibility to foreign policy to prevent us being drawn into war. The defensive power and military might of the Soviet country had to be put on a high level.

At this period the prestige of the U.S.S.R. as the bulwark of peace had gained tremendously in the eyes of the working people of all countries. The U.S.S.R. was the only nation openly to express its profound sympathy and support of the republicans in Spain; and in reply to greetings from the Central Committee of the Spanish Communist Party, Stalin declared that the defence of the Spanish people was the cause of all progressive mankind. The Soviet people openly expressed their profound sympathy and support of the Chinese people in their struggle against Japanese imperialism.

Guided by Stalin, the Soviet country strengthened its defences, built huge munitions plants capable of supplying the country with every species of arms in the event of war. An enlarged naval programme was undertaken, and the White Sea Canal was built, which is of immense defensive and economic importance. The navy, the submarine fleet, the air fleet and other arms expanded tremendously during this period, enabling the U.S.S.R. to carry on its work of building Socialism in peace.

In these, as in previous years, Stalin devoted great

attention to the training of skilled technical cadres, especially for the armed forces.

However, it was not only the technical equipment of the Soviet cadres to which Stalin paid attention. He has always attached the utmost importance to the ideological training of cadres. For this purpose he took part in the compilation of that splendid work, the "History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)". Compiled under the editorship of a commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), and to a large extent written by Stalin himself, its appearance was an event of major political importance. In it, the Soviet people and the working people of other countries received a short encyclopaedia of Bolshevik knowledge, a vivid, fascinating and precise exposition of the fundamental ideas of Bolshevism and of dialectical and historical materialism, a new and powerful weapon in the struggle for Communism.

In his speech at the Eighteenth Party Congress, Stalin pointed out that it was not any kind of cadres we needed, but cadres who had mastered not only technique, but also the science of sciences—the teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

Stalin performed vast work in this respect during this period.

At the same time he did immense work in respect to the ideological training of the members of the Party and the Young Communist League and of the working people as a whole. This constant concern for the Bolshevik education of the working people of the U.S.S.R. is revealed in his unrelaxing attention to the theoretical front, to the schools, the press and propaganda. We are already familiar with the great educational value of Stalin's book, "Problems of Leninism." This handbook for every Communist and every non-Party Bolshevik has been translated into scores of languages, both of the U.S.S.R. and other countries.

In 1938, on Stalin's suggestion, the Central Committee of the Party called a conference of propagandists, at which he made highly valuable recommendations for the improvement of propaganda work. These recommendations were embodied by the Central Committee in a resolution on the improvement of propaganda and the teaching of the history of the C.P.S.U.(B.) which marked a turning point in our propaganda work as a whole.

Stalin's utterances at Party congresses, at plenary meetings of the Central Committee and at numerous conferences are distinguished by the fact that they are always firmly grounded on principle, that they always raise new problems, give a new fillip to theory and open up new pros-

psects for the development of Bolshevik thought, and for the advance towards Communism.

The enemies of Bolshevism resort to the most extreme methods to retard the advance of the working people of the U.S.S.R. towards the complete and final victory of Communism. By acts of diversion, espionage, banditry and terrorism, they want to prevent the great progressive movement of the peoples. They still cherish hopes of restoring capitalism by means of the intervention of imperialist predatory powers. At congresses, plenary meetings of the Central Committee, and in the press, Stalin has repeatedly warned us against this danger. He teaches us to beware of self-complacency, of smug self-confidence and swelled head. He calls upon us to display constant revolutionary vigilance. He teaches us how to tear the mask from the enemy, to expose and crush him.

Under Stalin's guidance, the first phase of Communism—Socialism—has in the main been accomplished. This found a new reflection in the Constitution drawn up by Stalin and adopted by the Eighth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets.

"By that time . . . the capitalist elements had been entirely eliminated and the Socialist system had triumphed in all spheres of economic life." ("History of the C.P.S.U.[B.J.]") Public, socialist ownership of the means of production had become the unshakable foundation of the new socialist system in all branches of the national economy.

"As a result of all these changes in the sphere of the national economy of the U.S.S.R.," Stalin said in his report at the Eighth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, "we now have a new, socialist economy, which knows neither crises nor unemployment, which knows neither poverty nor ruin, and which provides our citizens with every opportunity to lead a prosperous and cultural life."

The class structure of society in the U.S.S.R. had thoroughly changed; all the exploited classes had been abolished. "The proletariat of the U.S.S.R. has been transformed into an entirely new class, into the working class of the U.S.S.R., which has abolished the capitalist economic system, which has established the Socialist ownership of the instruments and means of production and is directing Soviet society along the road to Communism." Such a working class is unknown in any other country of the world.

The peasantry had equally undergone a profound change. It had been emancipated from exploitation and had in the main become a collective-farm peasantry, whose prosperity was based on advanced, up-to-date machinery

and collective labour. This Stalin said, was "an entirely new peasantry, the like of which the history of mankind has never known before."

The intelligentsia had also changed under the Soviet regime; its composition was now thoroughly different; so was the character of its activities. It was intimately bound up with the workers, peasants and other sections of the working people and was employed in the service of the people, side by side with the people; "side by side with the workers and peasants, pulling together with them, it is engaged in building the new, classless, socialist society." There is no such intelligentsia in any other country on earth.

A change had also taken place in the relations of the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. as a result of the tremendous work of an organizational, economic, cultural and political character performed by the working people of all the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. under the guidance of the Bolsheviks and of Stalin in particular. "As a result," he said, "we now have a fully formed multi-national socialist state which has stood all tests, and whose stability might well be envied by any national state in any part of the world."

The Extraordinary Eighth Congress of Soviets adopted the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R., as the Fundamental Law of the socialist state of workers and peasants, the political foundation of which is the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which grew and attained strength as a result of the overthrow of the landlords and capitalists and the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this state all power belongs to the working people of town and country, as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies. The economic foundation of this state is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means of production firmly established as a result of the abolition of the capitalist system of economy, the abrogation of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the abolition of the exploitation of man by man. In this state the principle of Socialism is applied:—"From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

The Soviet Constitution guarantees the citizens of the U.S.S.R. the right to work; the right to rest and leisure; the right to maintenance in old age and in case of sickness or loss of capacity to work; the right to education; equal rights for women with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life; equality of rights of the citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social

and political life ; freedom of conscience ; freedom of speech, press, assembly and mass meeting, and of street processions and demonstrations ; the right to unite in public organizations ; inviolability of person ; inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence ; and the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

Such are the principal features of the New Soviet Constitution, which the people call the Stalin Constitution, both because it was Stalin who outlined the basic principle of this Constitution, and because it consolidates the great socialist victories achieved by the working people of the U.S.S.R. under the leadership of Stalin. The elections held on the basis of the new Constitution revealed a moral and political unity of the people of the U.S.S.R. without parallel in the world and impossible of achievement in capitalist states. In the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., held in December, 1937, nearly ninety million votes, or 98.6 per cent of the total vote, were cast for the Communist and non-Party bloc, while in the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics, held in June, 1938, ninety-two million votes, or 99.4 per cent of the total vote, were cast for the Communist and non-Party bloc. Referring to this at the Eighteenth Party Congress, Stalin said : "In the sphere of the social and political development of the country, we must regard the most important achievement during the period under review to be the fact that the remnants of the exploiting classes have been completely eliminated, that the workers, peasants and intellectuals have been welded into one common front of the working people, that the moral and political unity of Soviet society has been strengthened, that the friendship among the nations of our country has become closer, and as a result, that the political life of our country has been completely democratized and a new Constitution created. No one will dare deny that our Constitution is the most democratic in the world, and that the results of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., as well as to the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics, have been the most exemplary."

In 1939, the Eighteenth Party Congress was held. Stalin made a brilliant report in which he summed up the results of the struggle of the Party and of the working people of the U.S.S.R. for the victory of Communism. The Congress met amidst new conditions. He said at the Congress that "for the capitalist countries this period was one of profound perturbations in both the economic and political

spheres." For the capitalist countries these were years of depression, of new economic complications. "For the Soviet Union, on the contrary, these were years of growth and prosperity, of further economic and cultural progress, of further development of political and military might, of struggle for the preservation of peace throughout the world."

At this Party Congress, as at all others, Stalin laid great stress on Party propaganda and the Marxist-Leninist education of Party members and Party cadres. "There is," he said, "one branch of science which Bolsheviks in all branches of science are in duty bound to know, and that is the Marxist-Leninist science of society, of the laws of social development, of the laws of development of the proletarian revolution, of the laws of development of socialist construction, and of the victory of Communism." He declared that we must train our young cadres in the spirit of Bolshevism and help our cadres in all branches of work to master the Marxist-Leninist science of the laws of social development; "for," he said, "a man who calls himself a Leninist cannot be considered a real Leninist if he shuts himself up in his speciality, in mathematics, botany or chemistry, let us say, and sees nothing beyond that speciality. A Leninist cannot be just a specialist in his favourite science; he must also be a political and social worker, keenly interested in the destinies of his country, acquainted with the laws of social development, capable of applying these laws, and striving to be an active participant in the political guidance of the country."

At this Congress Stalin also dealt with a number of important questions of theory, two of which deserve special attention. They are the question of the new Soviet intelligentsia, and the question of the state. He proclaimed a determined struggle against every tendency to undervalue the new Soviet intelligentsia, and to treat it with disdain. Stalin teaches us that it will be impossible to achieve the final and complete victory of Communism, it will be impossible to overtake and outstrip the foremost capitalist countries in a very short time economically also if we do not ensure the proper training of our Soviet intelligentsia and a proper attitude towards them, and if we do not prevent the recrudescence of the old contemptuous, harmful, Makhayevsky attitude towards the intelligentsia. He set forth a new theory of the Soviet intelligentsia, which is a socialist intelligentsia, an intelligentsia springing from the people and working hand in hand with the workers and peasants for Communism.

He analysed the problem of the role of the state. He dealt a mortal blow at all "theories" of the dying away

of the state which belittled the role of the state in the period of struggle for Communism, when the capitalist encirclement had not yet been destroyed. He showed how important it was to *strengthen* the socialist state as long as that encirclement existed, and he himself has always worked to strengthen the state in the interests of the working people of the U.S.S.R.

Stalin devotes profound attention to the defence of the country. He goes personally into every detail, however small, connected with national defence, with the work of the munitions plants, the building of aeroplanes and tanks and of a powerful surface and submarine fleet. He is equally interested in matters of military supply and armament, and in the political education and material welfare of the Red Army men, commanders and political workers.

The great pilot of Communism, Stalin, is always to be found at his post, watching with a vigilant eye the activities of the governments of the surrounding capitalist states. He helps to steer the great Soviet vessel ever forward to new Communist victories.

He recognized the imminent danger of war with Germany, and by his supreme statesmanship in September, 1939, he averted the immediate threat, and thereby gained a respite which has since proved to be of critical importance. And when the Polish government fled before the advance of the German army in the West and abandoned the country to its fate, the Red Army fulfilled its duty by liberating the peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia from the yoke of the Polish gentry. This was in pursuance of the Leninist-Stalinist national policy, and the effect has been to still further strengthen the might of the Soviet Union and enhance its international prestige.

This event took place in 1939, the sixtieth year of Comrade Stalin's life.

In this same year, too, by the efforts of the working people of Uzbekistan, the Stalin Grand Ferghana Canal, 270 kilometres long, was built in forty-five days. A canal of this length would ordinarily require six or seven years to build. In the construction of this canal considerable assistance was given by the Soviet Government, the Bolshevik Party and by Stalin personally. When this heroic labour was completed, the builders of the Grand Ferghana Canal sent Stalin an address in verse in which they hailed him as the successor of Lenin and as the inspiration not only of the Bolshevik Party but of all the many peoples of the Soviet Union.

## CHAPTER XIII

### A LEADER OF NATIONS

Stalin's splendid career is marked by heroic struggle and effort. From his youth on, he has been a champion of the cause of the Party, the cause of the working class and of all labouring humanity. Ever since his first acquaintance with the teaching of Marx and Engels, he has been its ardent propagandist and a defender of creative, revolutionary Marxism. Ever since the end of the nineties, he marched side by side with Lenin, along the same road, never swerving to right or left. A victim of constant persecution at the hands of the tsarist authorities, time and again flung into prison and time and again driven into remote exile, he invariably returned to the fight.

He guided the Party in its preparations for the October attack. He organized the victory of the October Socialist Revolution. Together with Lenin, he built the new, socialist state, and he has staunchly defended it on all fronts. Together with Lenin, he built up the Third Communist International and defended it from all opportunists and all enemies of Marxism-Leninism. He is the leader of the great international association of Communist Parties and, more than that, he is the beloved leader of the people.

Stalin always keeps the weapon of Marxist theory keen and ready for action and he teaches us how to wield it. Both in conjunction with Lenin and independently, he has developed the great doctrine of Marxism-Leninism as a guide to action. The national question ; the question of the victory of Socialism in one country ; of the role of the Soviets ; of the state in a socialist country surrounded by a capitalist world ; of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a weapon in the struggle for Communism ; of the socialist industrialization of the country ; of the elimination of the kulaks as a class ; of the collectivization of agriculture ; of the education of socialist cadres ; of a socialist intelligentsia of the people—all these and many other highly important questions in the theory and practice of the accomplishment of Communism have been examined and answered by Stalin.

Sergei Kirov, that splendid Bolshevik whose life was cut short by the treacherous hand of a Trotskyite, speaking in 1934 at the Fifth Leningrad Regional Conference, said :

" It is not easy to grasp the figure of Stalin in all its gigantic proportions. In these latter years, ever since we have had to carry on our work without Lenin, there has been no major development in our labours, no innovation, slogan or trend of policy of any importance of which Comrade Stalin has not been the author. All the major work—and this the Party should know—is guided by the instructions, the initiative and the leadership of Comrade Stalin. The decision of all important problems of international policy is guided by his recommendations. And not only important problems, but even what might seem thirdd-rate, and even tenth-rate problems interest him, if they affect the workers, the peasants, the labouring people generally of our country.

" This, I must say, is true not only of the construction of Socialism in general, but even of the detailed problems of our work. If we take, for example, the defence of our country, it can be quite definitely stated that all the achievements which I have enumerated are solely and entirely due to Stalin.

" The powerful will and tremendous organizational talent of this man enables our Party promptly to effect the big historical changes connected with the successful building of Socialism."

That is the reason for Stalin's great influence and the eminent part he plays in the struggle for Communism. That is the reason for the profound love cherished for him by the Party, the Young Communist League and by the working people of the U.S.S.R. and other countries.

Replying to the numerous greetings received from all parts of the world on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday, Stalin said :

" You may have no doubt, comrades, that I am prepared in the future, too, to devote to the cause of the working class, to the cause of the proletarian revolution and world Communism, all my strength, all my faculties, and, if need be, all my blood, to the very last drop."

And everybody knows that these words come from the depths of his heart.

Profoundly devoted to the Party, to Lenin and the Communist International, with a profound knowledge of the theory of Marxism-Leninism, Stalin is also a gifted organizer. These qualities enable him to grasp the most complex problems and to explain them in a clear and simple way to the masses. Like Lenin, he possesses to

perfection the art of explaining the theory of Marxism-Leninism to the millions. To this must be added his extreme simplicity and modesty in everything—in dress, in his manner of life, in his wants, and in his relations with other people. And this quality of modesty, the adornment of a Bolshevik, he instils in all members of the Party and the Young Communist League. He teaches us all to be equally simple and modest.

"Stalin has written many books, splendid books. Many of them are classics of Marxist literature. But when asked, what manner of man he was, he replied: 'I am only a disciple of Lenin, and my aim is to be a worthy disciple of his.'" (Henri Barbusse, "Stalin.")

Stalin loves children and young people. He shows constant solicitude for the welfare of the youth, for their Communist training, for their health and physical fitness, so that they may grow up to be educated, well-informed, honest and staunch fighters for Communism. The Young Communist League owes its growth and influence largely to Stalin, and children and young people love him as their dearest friend, their father, teacher, and comrade.

He has an extraordinary capacity for work. There is scarcely a more industrious man in our country. He will often work until four in the morning. The circle of his interests is immense. Like Lenin, he spares no effort in the interest of the people and of the victory of Communism.

Henri Barbusse gives us a fine portrait of Stalin in his life of the leader.

"When one paces the Red Square at night, this spacious scene, against whose background time seems to have split in two—into all that is of to-day, of the nation of the best on earth, and into all that pre-dates 1917 (that which is archaic)—it seems as if he who lies in the tomb in the midst of this nocturnal, deserted square is the only one who is awake in the wide world, watching over the radiating life around him, over town and country. He is the true guide—he of whom the workers exultingly said that he was at once their master and their comrade, their father and brother who bent tenderly over all. You did not know him, but he knew you and worked for you. Whoever you may be, you need this benefactor. And whoever you may be, the better part of your destiny lies in the hands of this other man who also watches over all and who works for all—the man with the head of a scholar, the face of a worker, and the dress of a simple soldier."

Stalin is our teacher in the art of government and the art of work. One of the major rules of this art is contact with the masses. He himself is an example of perfection in attitude towards the masses and contact with them

He not only teaches the masses, but learns from them himself. Contact with the masses he regards as the earmark of the true Bolshevik. At the same time, this contact with and closeness to the masses in no way means fawning on them.

Irreconcilability in matters of principle, as exemplified in Stalin, is one of the most important qualities of a Bolshevik and a most effective instrument of Bolshevik education. He teaches us to display this Bolshevik irreconcilability to every attempt, even the slightest, to distort or misrepresent the teachings of Marxism-Leninism. Like Lenin, he trains us to be ruthless and irreconcilable to all enemies of Communism.

In the songs of the people, we find Stalin compared to a careful gardener who loves his garden—humanity. The most precious treasure we possess is people, cadres. It is his solicitude for people, for cadres, for human beings, that the people value in Stalin, and it is this we must learn from him.

His constant labours on the theory of Marxism-Leninism has trained in him the faculty of profound analysis and the ability to foresee events. The sense of the new is unusually developed in him, and that is why he sets us an example in Bolshevik foresight, without which it is impossible to lead, impossible to steer the great Soviet vessel of state.

Addressing his electors in the Stalin Area, Moscow, on December 11, 1937, he said :

"The electors, the people, must demand that their deputies should remain equal to their tasks, that in their work they should not sink to the level of political philistines, that in their posts they should remain political figures of the Lenin type, that as public figures they should be as clear and definite as Lenin was, that they should be as fearless in battle and as merciless towards the enemies of the people as Lenin was, that they should be free from all panic, from any semblance of panic, when things begin to get complicated and some danger or other looms on the horizon, that they should be as free from all semblance of panic as Lenin was, that they should be as wise and deliberate in deciding complex problems requiring a comprehensive orientation and a comprehensive weighing of all pros and cons as Lenin was, that they should be as upright and honest as Lenin was, that they should love their people as Lenin did."

Stalin possesses all these qualities. At his post as a political figure he is always a true Leninist. He is always as clear and definite a public figure as Lenin was. He is always as fearless in battle and as merciless towards the

enemies of the people as Lenin was. He is as free from all panic in complicated situations, when the country is menaced by danger, he is as free from all semblance of panic as Lenin was. He is as wise and deliberate in deciding complex problems requiring a comprehensive orientation and a comprehensive weighing of all pros and cons as Lenin was. He is as upright and honest as Lenin was. He loves his people as Lenin did. And that is why the people repay him with an equal love. They love Stalin as they loved Lenin.

"His life story," Henri Barbusse writes, "is one series of victories over a series of colossal difficulties. In all his career since 1917 there is not a single year in which what he has done would not have made another illustrious. He is a man of iron. His name describes him: Stalin—steel. He is as inflexible and as flexible as steel. His power lies in his profound common sense, his extensive range of knowledge, his astonishing internal concentration, his passion for precision, his inexorable consistency, the rapidity, certainty and intensity of his decisions, his perpetual care to select the right man for the right place."

"The dead survive only on earth. Lenin lives wherever there are revolutionaries. But one may say that in Stalin more than anywhere else live the thoughts and words of Lenin. He is the Lenin of our day. . . ." (Henri Barbusse, "Stalin.")

The people express their affection and admiration for Stalin in songs in which they laud him as a liberator of oppressed peoples, as a wise statesman. He is often compared to a keen-eyed and fearless mountain eagle. One song of the mountaineers of Daghestan runs:

As the wake to the ship,  
As furrow to share,  
Millions go with you,  
Everywhere;  
From the path we have taken  
Never to stray,  
The only true goal,  
The only true way.

The Laks, a tiny nationality, sing of Stalin as follows:

Rivers seek the sea,  
Iron seeks the lodestone,  
Grass seeks the sun  
Birds seek the south.  
But men are drawn to happiness,  
Men are drawn to truth,  
Their hearts are drawn to friendship,  
Their thoughts are drawn to you.

Stalin's life is a source of instruction to millions. His vivid personality inspires the working people in their struggle. His words are a source of inspiration to new feats of labour heroism, to an unparalleled mass heroism. His thoughts are a beacon illuminating our path far ahead.

At the helm of the great Soviet ship of state, sailing full speed ahead beneath the all-conquering banner of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, stands the great pilot, Stalin, the friend, the teacher, the leader of nations.

The children of the Soviet Union say: "Thank you Comrade Stalin, for our happy life." His name is pronounced with love and respect by millions of people in all parts of the world. His name is the banner of the vast victories of Communism, to the sun-lit peaks of which he is leading the Soviet people.

Long may he live and flourish, to the dismay of our enemies and to the joy of all working people—our own, dear Stalin !



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